Edited by Ingo Gildenhard

Teaching Dido

Critical Perspectives on *Aeneid* 4

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This is for John: the one and only

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Editor's Bio

Ingo Gildenhard is Professor of Classics and the Classical Tradition at the University of Cambridge and a fellow of King's College. His research interests range from Latin literature (with a special emphasis on the archaic period, Cicero, Virgil, and Ovid) to Roman culture (especially the political culture of the Roman republic) to the Classical Tradition and literary and social theory. He has published several titles with OBP: *Virgil, Aeneid 4, with Study Questions, Vocabulary, and Commentary*, 2026; *Virgil, Aeneid 11* (*Pallas & Camilla*), 2018 (with John Henderson); *Cicero, Philippic 2, 44–50, 78–92, 100–119: Latin Text, Study Aids with Vocabulary, and Commentary*, 2018; *Ovid, Metamorphoses, 3.511–733. Latin Text with Commentary*, 2016 (with Andrew Zissos); *Cicero, On Pompey's Command* (*De Imperio*), *27–49. Latin Text, Study Aids with Vocabulary, Commentary, and Translation*, 2014 (with Louise Hodgson, et al.); *Tacitus, Annals, 15.20–23, 33–45. Latin Text, Study Aids with Vocabulary, and Commentary*, 2013 (with Mathew Owen); *Virgil, Aeneid 4.1–299: Latin Text, Study Questions, Commentary and Interpretive Essays*, 2012; *Cicero, Against Verres, 2.1.53–86: Latin Text with Introduction, Study Questions, Commentary and English Translation*, 2011.

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Preface

Teaching Dido is designed as a companion volume to the OBP commentary on *Aeneid* 4.[1] The first part consists of the student-focused interpretative essays that were tucked in at the end of the 2012 outing on the first 300 lines of the book.[2] They are here re-issued in revised, abridged, or expanded form (as appropriate), together with an additional piece entitled 'Transvaluating *pietās*', designed to offer students and teachers some critical purchase on a quality often simply taken as a 'Roman given'. I have tried to maintain a reasonably light touch, with a minimum of scholarly scaffolding. The second part ('Critical Approaches') features research articles by colleagues that I have found particularly insightful and rewarding to think with while working on the commentary (here re-printed in chronological sequence), alongside two chapters (co-)written by myself. These last two pieces set out some of the broader arguments about Virgil, Dido, and the *Aeneid* that the commentary presents in necessarily more fragmented fashion. They are here included to enable students to follow up on cross-references in the commentary and the interpretative essays with minimal fuss and without running into access issues (if at the price of a certain amount of repetition).

The material assembled here combines a tight focus on Dido herself (in her Virgilian, pre-Virgilian, and, to some extent, also post-Virgilian incarnations) and broader frames of reference, concerning both the *Aeneid* and the historical context. Essay 1, 'Content and Form', takes a look at the craftsmanship that informs Virgil's literary world-making

1 Gildenhard, Ingo (2026), *Virgil, Aeneid 4, with Study Questions, Vocabulary, and Commentary*, Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0527

2 Gildenhard, Ingo (2012), *Virgil, Aeneid 4.1–299: Latin Text, Study Questions, Commentary and Interpretive Essays*, Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0023

through a close analysis of his description of the cave of the winds, which sets up the programmatic tension between cosmos and chaos, one of the key organising principles at work in his epic universe, and serves as prelude to the storm that blows Aeneas Dido's way. Essay 2, 'Historiographical Dido', explores the pre-Virgilian versions of the Dido story, within the wider dynamics of canon formation that centre some texts and de-centre others. In the case of Dido, this has resulted in a 'split tradition', with Virgil's myth-making marginalising but not entirely overwriting an earlier account of Dido in which she does not meet Aeneas. Essay 3, 'Allusion', surveys the Greek and Latin predecessors Virgil makes part of the literary and thematic economy of his epic before illustrating, by way of a DIY exercise, how the information collected in commentaries (often in a rather cryptic way) can serve as starting point for adventures in Echo-land (not least when it comes to Dido). Essay 4, 'Religion', sets out the many ways in which *Aeneid* 4 brings supernatural aspects into play, with reference to diverse spheres of religious thought and practice, before attempting to identify how the various elements (disparate, indeed conflicting at first sight) might cohere, not least when read against recent historical experiences (civil war) and the emerging Augustan principate. It includes an assessment of the 'religious agency' of various characters in *Aeneid* 4, above all Dido, who emerges as unique. Essay 5, 'Transvaluating *Pietās*', investigates the republican background of this key Roman quality, which Aeneas 'regains' the moment he decides to break up with Dido and leave Carthage (which, in her eyes, renders him the exact opposite, *impius*), and Virgil's innovative deployment of this concept in the *Aeneid* as a whole.

In many ways the essays draw on, and are hence also meant, as introductions to the pieces of scholarship collected under Section 2 on 'Critical Approaches'. These have a deliberately broad remit meant to enable students and their teachers to situate Dido, the *Aeneid* (especially Book 4), Virgil himself and imperial Rome within wider contextual parameters. Chapter 6, 'Aeneas as *Hospes* in Vergil, *Aeneid* 1 and 4' by Roy Gibson, offers a comprehensive reading of the first third of the *Aeneid* through the lens of guest-friendship and its associated values, also in comparison and contrast to Homer's handling of this key theme and institution. It traces Dido's changing views of Aeneas' status, from guest-friend (*hospes*) to imaginary husband (*coniūnx*) back to guest-

friend and, finally, enemy (*hostis*), and raises the more general question of what normative benchmarks to employ in assessing the agency and moral choices of Virgil's characters (as well as those of the poet in imagining them the way he did). Chapter 7, 'Furthest Voices in Virgil's Dido' by Alessandro Schiesaro, takes the deepest possible dive into the intertextual multiverse, illustrating at an unrivalled degree of nuance and sophistication how an allusively attuned reading of Virgil's text may enrich Dido's psychological complexity. Chapter 8, 'Translating Empire from Carthage to Rome' by Josephine Crawley Quinn, offers a novel analysis of the wider geopolitical context for Virgil's imaginary Carthage (and his aetiology of the mortal enmity between Carthage and Rome): she advances the argument that the Romans of the republic were eager students of Carthaginian imperialism, before eventually displacing their forerunners on the world-historical stage. And Chapter 9, 'Rac(ializ)ing Dido' by Elena Giusti, offers a cutting-edge exploration of discourses of race and ethnicity at work in the *Aeneid* (and beyond), with particular attention to the African setting and in intimate dialogue with contemporary theory. As mentioned, the final two chapters are included primarily to enable users of the commentary without easy access to library resources to follow up arguments presented therein. The emphasis here falls on Virgil's authorial self-fashioning, his interaction with the novel realities of the Augustan principate, Roman identity formation, the myth of Troy in the Roman imaginary, and (Dido's place within) the *Aeneid*'s philosophy of history.

Acknowledgements

All reprinted contributions have been reset, but with the original formatting retained (which accounts for the diversity in styles). Original page numbers have been inserted, in square brackets and bold, to facilitate citation. Minimal changes are largely confined to the corrections of obvious typos and the updating of references referred to as 'forthcoming' in the original publications. But in the interest of accessibility, I have in places added translations to Greek and Latin quotations. These have usually been taken from editions of the Loeb Classical Library, with minor adjustments as necessary. The original places of publications are as follows:

- Chapter 6: Gibson, Roy K. (1999), 'Aeneas as *Hospes* in Vergil, *Aeneid* 1 and 4', *Classical Quarterly* 49.1, 184–202, https://doi.org/10.1093/cq/49.1.184
- Chapter 7: Schiesaro, Alessandro (2008), 'Furthest Voices in Virgil's Dido', *Studi italiani di filologia classica* n.s. 6, 60–109, 194–245.
- Chapter 8: Quinn, Josephine Crawley (2017), 'Translating Empire from Carthage to Rome', *Classical Philology* 112.3, 312–31, https://doi.org/10.1086/692761
- Chapter 9: Giusti, Elena (2023), 'Rac(ializ)ing Dido', *Proceedings of the Virgil Society* 31, 53–85.
- Chapter 10: Gildenhard, Ingo (2007), 'Virgil vs. Ennius, or: The Undoing of the Annalist', in William Fitzgerald and Emily Gowers (eds), *Ennius Perennis: The Annals and Beyond* (Cambridge Philological Society Supplement Series 31), Cambridge, 73–102.

- Chapter 11: Geisthardt, Johannes and Gildenhard, Ingo (2019), 'Trojan Plots: Conceptions of History in Catullus, Virgil and Tacitus', in Ingo Gildenhard, Ulrich Gotter, Wolfgang Havener and Louise Hodgson (eds), *Augustus and the Destruction of History: The Politics of the Past in Early Imperial Rome* (Cambridge Philological Society Supplement Series 41), Cambridge, 241–82.

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As with the commentary, I have tried to enrich the text with some visual material and wish to reiterate my expression of profound gratitude to those visionary institutions who have placed their collection (or significant parts thereof) in the Public Domain, thus substantially increasing the pool of available images. In this volume such images come from The British Museum, London; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and The Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, as well as Wikimedia. As ever, I am deeply appreciative of Alessandra Tosi, Rupert Gatti, and the team at Open Book Publishers for their help and support at every stage of this project. I am also most grateful to the J. Paul Getty Trust for the award of a fellowship in the context of the Getty Villa Research Theme 'Religious Experience in Antiquity', which enabled me to finalize Essays 4 ('Religion') and 5 ('Transvaluating *Pietās*') and to review the proofs in conditions as inspiring as they are idyllic. Last but not least, it gives me the greatest pleasure to dedicate the volume to John Henderson, whose gratuitous generosity over the years (not least when it comes to ventures with OBP) has consistently left me speechless.

INTERPRETATIVE ESSAYS

Essay 1: Content and Form[1]

Virgil's genius manifests itself not least (some would argue above all) in how he uses metre and other formal devices to express his subject matter. Unlike other aspects of his poetry, the appreciation of his verbal artistry requires comparatively little prior knowledge. All it takes is a good look at how design reinforces theme. Just Do It (as Nike would put it): there is a lot to be noticed and enjoyed. It is, moreover, the dimension of Virgil's poetry most likely lost in translation and hence an excellent reason for engaging with the Latin original.[2] To illustrate the returns that attention to the formal aspects of Virgil's poetry (metre, verse design, lexical choices, syntax) can yield for the understanding of the literary universe he created in the *Aeneid*, this essay looks at a passage from Book 1, which offers a programmatic treatment of the themes of cosmic order (and chaos). The exercise is meant to illustrate what a close reading of Virgil's poetry can unearth and to serve as encouragement to subject *Aeneid* 4 to similar scrutiny (or, if you will, interpretative overkill). The passage prepares for the 'ill-wind' that blows Aeneas into Dido's path and thus sets the stage for the tragedies to follow.

1 This chapter is a revised version of material originally published in Ingo Gildenhard (2012), *Virgil*, *Aeneid 4.1–299: Latin Text*, *Study Questions*, *Commentary and Interpretive Essays*, Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0023

2 Cf. Lateiner 1990: 237: 'Inflected languages possess unique expressive resources that most modern languages rarely can duplicate. Languages with a relatively fixed word-order do not enjoy Latin's syntactic flexibility. "Mimetic syntax" identifies another pleasure of Latin poetry, a technique that does not occur so often or effectively in Latin prose. While some patterns have parallels in Latin prose, many depend upon verse boundaries, caesura, enjambment, and other rhythmic features, or upon the ludic element so prominent in Augustan poets.'

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Aeneid 1.52–59: The Cave of the Winds

The first scene of actual narrative in the *Aeneid*, which kicks in after the extensive proem (*Aen*. 1.1–33), features Aeneas and his men setting out from Sicily for the Italian mainland. The sight of Aeneas about to reach his final destination mightily displeases Juno. Seeing her divinity under threat by her adversary's impending triumph, she decides to interfere. Determined to sink Aeneas' fleet, she pays a visit to Aeolia, where the wind-god Aeolus resides, ruling the storms, which are imprisoned in a cave. Virgil's description of the 'Cave of the Winds' includes the following line (*Aen*. 1.53):

> *luctantīs uentōs tempestātēsque sonōrās* ^{1}– – | ^{2}– – | ^{3}– – | ^{4}– – | ^{5}– u u | ^{6}– –
> [The struggling winds and the noisy storms]

Here is Austin's comment on the verse:[3]

> A fine line, showing metrically and linguistically the noise and straining of the imprisoned winds:
> – the massive spondees (the maximum number possible),
> – the struggle of ictus and word-accent,[4]
> – the huge stretch of *tempestātēsque* from the third to the fifth foot,
> – the highly charged epithet *sonōrās* ending the line
> all combine to form a memorable sound-picture.

This is a nice trawl of observations. But the first principle of reading Virgil holds that there is always more to see. It would not be difficult to add further points:

(*a*) The first word of the line, *luctantīs* 'struggling', contains a hint of enactment within itself, insofar as it illustrates the '*struggle* between ictus and word-accent' spotted by Austin.

(*b*) The line is chiastic in design: attribute (*luctantīs*) noun (*uentōs*) noun (*tempestātēs*) attribute (*sonōrās*).

(*c*) The opening phrase *luctantīs uentōs* contains all five vowels of the alphabet in topsy-turvy sequence: *u*, *a*, *i*, *e*, *o*. This enacts on the level of the individual letter the idea of the winds as forces of chaos – a point

3 Austin 1971: 44, layout adjusted.

4 In *luctantīs*, the ictus falls on *luc-* and *-tīs*, the word-accent on *-tan-*; in *uentōs*, the ictus falls on *-tōs*, the word accent on *uen-*; in *tempestātēsque*, the ictus falls on *-pest-* and *-tēs-*, the word-accent on *-tāt-*; in *sonōrās* ictus and word-accent coincide on *-nōr-*.

that acquires further depth if we recall the reminiscences of Lucretius that Virgil has built into this passage.[5] According to Lucretius' Epicurean physics, the universe consists of elementary particles (atoms) and void; his poem *Dē Rērum Nātūrā* correlates the construction of the world out of atoms and the construction of poetry out of letters on a grand scale.

But this is by no means the end of the matter. The full picture only comes into view once we consider the line as part of the larger block of verses to which it belongs. Here is Virgil's description of the Cave of the Winds in its entirety – and how it scans (1.52–9):

[52][Aeoliam uenit.] hīc uāstō rēx Aeolus antrō	[1]– uu | [2]– uu | **C** [3]– – | [4]– – | [5]– uu | [6]– –
[53]luctantīs uentōs tempestātēsque sonōrās	[1]– – | [2]– – | [3]– **c** – | [4]– – | [5]– uu | [6]– –
[54]imperiō premit ac uinclīs et carcere frēnat.	[1]– uu | [2]– uu | [3]– – | [4]– – | [5]– uu | [6]– u
[55]illī indignantēs magnō cum murmure montis	[1]– – | [2]– – | [3]– **c** – | [4]– – | [5]– uu | [6]– u
[56]circum claustra fremunt; celsā sedet Aeolus arce	[1]– – | [2]– uu | [3]– **C** – | [4]– uu | [5]– uu | [6]– u
[57]scēptra tenēns mollitque animōs et temperat īrās.	[1]– uu | [2]– **c** – | [3]– uu | [4]– **c** – | [5]– uu | [6]– –
[58]nī faciat, maria ac terrās caelumque profundum	[1]– uu | [2]– **c** uu | [3]– – | [4]– – | [5]– uu | [6]– u
[59]quippe ferant rapidī sēcum uerrantque per aurās.	[1]– uu | [2]– uu | [3]– – | [4]– – | [5]– uu | [6]– –

Key to scanning symbols:
– = Syllable scanning long
u = Syllable scanning short
| = Demarcating the six feet of the hexameter
c = Weak break in sense, whether caesura (in the middle of a foot) or diaeresis (at the end of a foot)
C = Strong break in sense, whether caesura (in the middle of a foot) or diaeresis (at the end of a foot)

Translation:
She [sc. Juno] came to Aeolia. Here in a vast cavern, king Aeolus keeps under his command the struggling winds and the roaring storms and reins them in with fetters and prison. They, in their anger, with mighty moans of the mountain, bluster around their enclosure. Aeolus sits in his high citadel, holding his sceptre, soothing their passions and tempering their rage. If he did not, they would surely carry off in utmost speed the seas and lands and the high heaven and carry them through the air.

5 Hardie 1986: 90–7.

Virgil's description of the cave of the wind begins after the strong diaeresis at the end of the second foot in line 52: there is a marked break between *Aeoliam uenit* and the subsequent excursus of interest to us here, which begins with [52]*hīc* and ends with [59]*aurās*. The first thing to note is that the eight lines that partake in the description fall into four pairs of corresponding verses:

- the second half of 52 (*hīc uāstō rēx Aeolus antrō*) correlates with the second half of 56 (*celsā sedet Aeolus arce*)
- 53 correlates with 55
- 54 correlates with 57
- 58 correlates with 59

This leaves only the first half of 56 (*circum claustra fremunt*) without a counterpart. (There is a good reason for this exception: see below.) Let's take a look at each of the pairs in turn:

(*a*) 52[b] and 56[b]:
The correlation between the second half of 52 (... *uāstō rēx Aeolus antrō*) and the second half of 56 (... *celsā sedet Aeolus arce*) involves both content and metrical design. In each line, Aeolus occupies the fifth foot of the verse. Both times he is framed by an ablative phrase, with the attribute bridging the third and fourth foot (*uāstō*, *celsā*) and modifying a bi-syllabic noun in the sixth foot (*antrō*, *arce*) – a correspondence enhanced by the *a*-alliteration and what could be called 'topographical antithesis': *antrō* and *arce* are polar opposites, housing, as they do, the contrary forces of chaos (the winds in their vast cave) and cosmos (Aeolus on his high citadel). The two attributes, with their focus on horizontal expansion (*uāstus*) and vertical height (*celsus*) reinforce the contrast and generate a sense of totality: the cave of the winds represents the world. It is what the French call a *mise en abîme*, the inclusion of a replica of an image within itself, a common practice in heraldry and poetry.[6] Here Virgil uses the cave of the winds as a microcosmic stand-in for the macro-cosmos.

6 The oldest *mise en abîme* in the Greco-Roman tradition, as already noticed by a scholiast, is the representation of the Trojan war Helen stitches on a piece of cloth in *Iliad* 3 (125–8: '... she was weaving a great purple web of double fold on which she was embroidering many battles of the horse-taming Trojans and the bronze-clad Achaeans, which for her sake they had endured at the hands of Ares').

(*b*) 53 and 55:

[53]*luctantīs uentōs tempestātēsque sonōrās*
[55]*illī indignantēs magnō cum murmure montis*

Both lines scan the same, with a weak caesura in the third foot (the technical term is 'penthemimeres'): – – | – – | – **c** – | – – | – uu | – x.[7] This is again thematically apt. Both lines are about the same subject matter: the winds that strain in the cave, struggling to break free. 55 is in many ways an elaboration on 53: *indignantēs* picks up *luctantīs*. Both are present participles of deponent verbs, but *luctantīs* describes the physical effort of the winds, whereas *indignantēs* refers to their mindset. Virgil thereby supplies first an objective, then a subjective perspective on these natural forces, increasing the sense of personification and providing a reason for why they struggle: *indīgnantur ergō luctantur*. Just as *luctantīs*, *indignantēs* features a clash between ictus and word accent (the ictus falling on *-dīg-* and *-tēs*, the accent on *-nan-*); and in stretching across three feet (first, second, beginning of third), an effect enhanced by elision with *illī*, the four-syllable word recalls a similar verbal monstrosity in 53 (*tempestātēsque*). Likewise, *sonōrās* finds further articulation in *magnō cum murmure montis*: both the attribute and the ablative phrase refer to the clamour caused by the winds. In all, then, 55 is a magnificent continuation of the sound-picture initiated in 53, especially in the combination of *m*-alliteration with assonance (*ma-*, *-um*, *mur-*, *-mur-*, *mon-*).[8]

(*c*) 54 and 57:

[54]*imperiō premit ac uinclīs et carcere frēnat*	– uu | – uu | – – | – – | – uu | – u
[57]*scēptra tenēns mollitque animōs et temperat īrās*	– uu | – **c** – | – uu | – **c** – | – uu | – –

While the lines do not scan the same, they are still very much alike from a metrical point of view. The only differences are: 54 is spondaic in the third foot, whereas 57 is spondaic in the second foot; and 57 has two weak caesuras: in the second foot (after *scēptra tenēns*) and the fourth foot (after *animōs*).[9] The fourth and fifth foot scan identically, and both lines,

7 For scanning purposes, the quantity of the final syllable does not matter, hence the use of 'x'. In 53 it is long, in 55 short.

8 The alliterative patterning starts with *illī indignantēs* and continues in the following line (56) with *circum claustra*.

9 One could posit a (very) weak diaeresis in 54 after *premit*.

in their mixture of dactylic and spondaic feet (3:2, not counting the final one) contrast sharply with the pair of 53 and 55 where the correlation is distinctly different: one dactylic foot (the fifth) to four spondaic ones. This contrast in metrical design has a thematic correspondence: the spondaic pair 53 and 55 is all about the winds, building up anger and energy as they strain against their prison (hence spondees are fitting, conveying a sense of the angry straining); 54 and 57 are all about Aeolus, as he controls and calms down the winds (hence dactyls suit, conveying a sense of the resolution of the penned-up energy and anger).

A sense of resolution also operates in 54 and 57 on the levels of syntax and sound. The defining feature is parallelism, combined with cross-verse chiasmus: in 54, we get two syntactical units in which a phrase in the instrumental ablative (*imperiō*; *uinclīs et carcere*) is followed by the verb (*premit*; *frēnat*); in 57, we get two syntactical units in which the verb (*mollit*; *temperat*) is followed by the accusative object (*animōs*; *īrās*). (This leaves out *scēptra tenēns*, to which I shall return shortly: it is the cherry of the line.) In all, the parallel design within lines 54 and 57 and the chiastic arrangement across underscores the activity of Aeolus, which consists in defusing the violent uproar of the storms. The vowel patterns in *mollitque animōs et temperat īrās* (= *o - i - a - i - ō* and *e - e - a, - ī - ā*) enhance the effect in their symmetry and similarity, and so does the assonance in *mol-*, *-mōs* and *-rat*, *-rās*. The two lines feature complementary approaches: 54 is all about physical force and the application of violent means of restraint (*premere*, *frenāre*; *uincla*, *carcer*); 57 is all about affecting the mind-set of the storms, soothing their passion and adjusting their outlook (*mollīre*, *temperāre*). This pair of verses thus features a shift in emphasis that corresponds to the shift from an objective ([53]*luctantīs*) to a subjective ([55]*indignantēs*) perspective on the winds.

More generally, line 53 finds resolution in 54 and 55 in 57: the chiastic-spondaic straining of [53]*luctantīs uentōs tempestātēsque sonōrās* yields to parallel constructions and the dactylic release of [54]*imperiō premit ac uinclīs et carcere frēnat* (= two units in which an instrumental ablative is followed by a verb); and the spondaic straining of [55]*illī indignantēs magnō cum murmure montis* yields to the dactylic release of [57]*scēptra tenēns mollitque animōs et temperat īrās* (= two units in which a verb is followed by its accusative object). Moreover, the grammatical gender of the two nouns in 53, *uentōs* (masculine) and *tempestātēs* (feminine), mirrors that of the nouns in 57,

animōs (m.) and *īrās* (f.). Significantly, however, the presence of the winds diminishes over the course of those five lines. In 53, the winds and storms are mentioned explicitly and come with modifying attributes (*luctantīs*, *sonōrās*); in 55, they are referred to with the demonstrative pronoun *illī*; and in 57 we only get a partial perspective of their mindset (*animōs*) and their emotional state (*īrās*), each without a modifier: the storms seem to lose their ferocity together with their attributes.

So far, we have left the opening of 57 (*scēptra tenēns*) out of consideration. To see what it is doing we need to get the entire sentence into view, beginning in the second half of 56:

[56]... celsā sedet Aeolus arce
[57]scēptra tenēns mollitque animōs et temperat īrās.

The sentence consists of a tricolon: *sedet*, *mollit* (the *-que* after *mollit* links *sedet* and *mollit*), *temperat*. The initial colon, from *celsā* to *tenēns*, stands apart in sense and syntax from the second and third (which are by and large identical in design). Yet overall, it has the same arrangement of verb followed by noun (or here nouns: the subject *Aeolus* and the ablative of place *arce*) as *mollit ... animōs et temperat īrās*. But it also features the participle phrase *scēptra tenēns*, which inverts this pattern: here we get the noun (the acc. obj. *scēptra*) first and the verb second (the present participle *tenēns*). In terms of syntactic order, *scēptra tenēns* is thus set apart from the rest of the sentence, an effect enhanced by the metre: *scēptra tenēns* forms a metrical unit all its own, a so-called choriambus (– u u –). Significantly, the line that 57 corresponds to (= 54) starts with the word *imperiō*, which also scans as a choriambus: *im-* is long by position, *-per-* and *-i-* are short, and the final *-ō* is again long. By metrical design Virgil thus suggests an affinity between *imperiō* and *scēptra tenēns*. This is borne out on the thematic level: the word *imperiō* (an ablative of means or instrument: 'by his power of command') and the phrase *scēptra tenēns* ('holding the sceptre', as the symbol of his power of command) are virtual synonyms of one another.

Virtual, but *not* precise synonyms: for *imperium* is just as quintessentially Roman as *scēptra* is quintessentially Greek. *Imperium*, from which the English 'empire' derives, initially signified the right and power of the Roman magistrate to issue orders and to enforce obedience (during the late republic and early principate it then acquired

the geographical meaning of empire, i.e. the region *over which* Rome exercised the right and power of command). The *imperium* wielded by the high magistrate of the *rēs pūblica* in the field epitomizes the Roman politics of power. The term notably recurs in the famous 'mission statement' in *Aeneid* 6.851–3 (Anchises speaking to his son, but here addressing his son's 'race', the Romans, in their entirety):

> tū regere imperiō populōs, Rōmāne, mementō
> (hae tibi erunt artēs), pācīque impōnere mōrem,
> parcere subiectīs et dēbellāre superbōs.
>
> [you, Roman, be mindful to rule the peoples with the power to command (these shall be your arts), to impose traditional order upon peace, to spare the vanquished, and to war down the proud.]

In contrast, *scēptra* is a loanword in Latin, deriving from the Greek σκῆπτρον/*scēptron*. Virgil seems to have been the first Latin poet to use it. The most famous sceptre in Greek literature is that of Agamemnon in the *Iliad*, which can boast of an illustrious pedigree provided by Homer himself when he mentions the sceptre for the first time: Hephaestus wrought the sceptre for Zeus, Zeus passed it on to Hermes (Mercurius in Latin), Hermes to Pelops, Pelops to Atreus, Atreus to Thyestes, and Thyestes to Agamemnon (*Iliad* 2.100–9). It is surely the sceptre of Zeus that Virgil wishes to evoke, especially since Aeolus was put in charge of the winds by Jupiter (1.60–3, cited below).[10] In all, then, Virgil associates Aeolus with the exercise of power in a cosmic system, drawing on both Greek and Roman concepts, symbols, and traditions of rule. This 'cultural hybridity', consisting in the juxtaposition and conflation of 'the Greek' and 'the Roman' (reifications that implicitly exclude other cultural configurations that Greeks and Romans would dismiss as 'barbarian') is typical of the *Aeneid* as a whole, a Roman variant of, and supercessionary response to, Homeric epic.

(*d*) 58 and 59:

[58]nī faciat, maria ac terrās caelumque profundum – uu | – **c** uu | – – | – – | – uu | – u
[59]quippe ferant rapidī sēcum uerrantque per aurās. – uu | – uu | – – | – – | – uu | – –

10 The Homeric-*Odyssean* counterpart of Virgil's Aeolus, while also put in charge of the winds by Zeus, does not wield a sceptre at all: *Odyssey* 10.1–27.

With the three previous pairings (52 ~ 56; 53 ~ 55; 54 ~ 57) at least one line from another pair intervened. The final pair discontinues this practice, in the interest of closure. There are two further changes: a switch from indicative to subjunctive; and the first instance of hypotaxis in the passage, the conditional sequence introduced by *nī*. Aeolus' presence in these two concluding verses is reduced to the opening two words *nī faciat*. But the protasis exercises control over the magnificent apodosis that follows. Metre again enhances theme: *nī faciat* scans as a choriambus, and thus recalls [54]*imperiō* and [57]*scēptra tenēns*: it refers to the exercise of the power Aeolus wields, which finds (symbolic) articulation in his *imperium* and his holding of the sceptre. After the caesura (a trithemimeres) it is all over to the winds who are counterfactually imagined to sweep chaotically through the cosmos the way they sweep through 58 and 59: without break.

After this detailed analysis of the four line-pairings, we can now put the entire passage back together and see how the individual components work as a whole. The prevailing theme is the uneasy relation between Aeolus, the ruler of the winds, and the winds, his unruly subjects. Here are the verses again, with those parts highlighted in bold that concern Aeolus and those in italics that concern the winds:

hīc uāstō rēx Aeolus antrō	52
luctantīs uentōs tempestātēsque sonōrās	53
imperiō premit ac uinclīs et carcere frēnat.	54
illī indignantēs magnō cum murmure montis	55
circum claustra fremunt; **celsā sedet Aeolus arce**	56
scēptra tenēns mollitque *animōs* et temperat *īrās*.	57
nī faciat, *maria ac terrās caelumque profundum*	58
quippe ferant rapidī sēcum uerrantque per aurās.	59
SED PATER OMNIPOTENS...	60

In quantitative terms, the distribution of verse-time given to Aeolus and the winds is fairly balanced. 53 is entirely devoted to the winds, 54 entirely to Aeolus; one-and-a-half verses devoted to the winds follow (55–56[a]), followed by one-and-a-half verses devoted to showing Aeolus forcing the winds into submission (56[b]–57). The final two lines, however, are almost entirely given over to the winds – but they describe a counterfactual scenario. Overall, Aeolus does come out on top but

is *almost* blown away. His presence in 52, which functions as keynote, ensures that Aeolus dominates both the beginning and the end of the first six lines dedicated to description, in a structural enactment of the relationship that applies between him and the winds: he sits on top and controls the end, whereas the winds are imprisoned in the middle. The overall *architecture* of this block of verses (and the metaphor from the sphere of the visual arts seems entirely appropriate here) thus reflects the fetters (*uincla*) and the cave (*antrum*) that function as prison (*carcer*) of the winds, giving special prominence to who is in charge.

This structural enactment finds further amplification if we expand our analysis beyond purely quantitative considerations and bring quality into play. Even though the winds get almost as much verse-time as Aeolus, they are not his equals in terms of grammar and syntax. On the contrary: while Aeolus, when present, is present only in the subject position, the position of the winds alternates: objects initially (53), they become subjects in 55–56^{b} but ultimately end up as objects again (57), before featuring as subjects in a counterfactual apodosis, which describes activities obviated by Aeolus, the subject of the protasis (58–9). The distribution of subject and object positions assumed by Aeolus and the winds looks as follows:

52^{b}: Aeolus (subject)
53: The winds (direct object)
54: Aeolus (subject)
55: The winds (subject)
56: *The winds* (*subject*) & Aeolus (subject)
57: Aeolus (subject) & the winds (direct object)
58: Aeolus (subject of *nī*-clause) & the winds (subject of main clause)
59: The winds (continuing subject of main clause)

Presented like this, the most interesting line is 56. Here, uniquely, both the winds and Aeolus feature as subjects of a main clause: Virgil stages a moment of struggle in which the winds and Aeolus clash head-on. Two formal features reinforce the confrontation: the first half of 56 (*circum claustra fremunt*) is the only portion of the entire passage not tied into a correlation: it stands out and apart, footloose and unfettered. Not coincidentally, this is precisely the place in the overall design where the winds assert themselves most forcefully in their quest for freedom. And

right after *fremunt*, we get the only truly strong caesura in the entire passage: Virgil has inserted the most dramatic break at the metrical level at the most dramatic moment. 'Will the winds break out?' one is forced to ponder during the instant of suspense generated by the powerful penthemimeres, before one reads on and receives reassurance that Aeolus continues to succeed in holding the winds in check, suppressing the uproar, calming down the destructive emotions, and returning the winds from agents of their own to the status of (accusative) objects.

Still, those one-and-a-half lines of syntactical empowerment that Virgil grants the winds (as well as the level of quantitative attention they receive, which is almost equal to that of Aeolus) are typical of the *Aeneid* and Virgil's other poetry. He here offers a vignette of a pattern that shapes and recurs throughout the entire narrative, with a force of chaos challenging and threatening to overpower – always almost but never quite (fully) succeeding – a force of cosmos. Aeolus and the winds have counterparts in Jupiter and Juno, Aeneas and Dido, Aeneas and Turnus, Hercules and Cacus, or Apollo and the monstrous Egyptian divinities as well as Octavian and Cleopatra as depicted on the shield of Aeneas in Book 8. Virgil operates with a view of the world that has affinities with Manichean thought or the Chinese concept of yin and yang, though one should avoid oversimplification: the description of the cave of the winds precedes the successful bullying with bribery of Aeolus by Juno, who induces the wind-warden to unleash his charges from their prison to wreak havoc on Aeneas and his fleet.[11]

Still, in the end, cosmos comes out on top (this time). But make no mistake: those winds are powerful, and their policing requires constant effort and vigilance. Again, Virgil's syntax enacts both aspects. The power of the winds rattles the mountain, which manifests itself in the ambiguity of reference: the genitive *montis* at the end of 55 could go either with [55]*magnō cum murmure* or [56]*circum claustra*. It is perhaps best construed as belonging to both, a position of *apo koinou* that hints at the way the mountain groans and rattles under the impact of the straining winds enclosed therein. As for the effort: lines 52–7 contain one finite verb of which the winds are subject: [56]*fremunt*. In contrast, Aeolus is the subject of five finite verbs: [54]*premit*, [54]*frenat*, [56]*sedet*, [57]*mollit*, [57]*temperat*:

11 The classic study of Virgil's cosmos is Hardie 1986. See also Quint 1993.

keeping those winds in check takes some doing![12] And our final image, if in a hypothetical scenario, is of the winds returning the cosmos to chaos. Ultimately, what keeps them in check is not Aeolus, a minor divinity of the pantheon; it is Jupiter himself, the divine supremo to rule them all and bind them all. Appropriately, the subsequent four verses are dedicated to his overlordship (1.60–3):

> sed pater omnipotēns spēluncīs abdidit ātrīs,
> hoc metuēns, mōlemque et montīs insuper altōs
> imposuit rēgemque dedit, quī foedere certō
> et premere et laxās scīret dare iussus habēnās.
>
> [But the omnipotent father hid them in dark caves, fearful of this, and piled high mountains on top of them and established a king who, under fixed contract, knew how to tighten and let loose the reins at command.]

The Cave of the Winds thus emblematically encapsulates the poetic vision (and the poetics) that inform the *Aeneid* as a whole. In Virgil's literary cosmos the forces of chaos constantly lurk under the surface and strive to assert themselves, frequently succeed in doing so, only to be forced into submission again in indignant defeat, whether at the cosmic level or in human affairs. In fact, right after the description of patriarchal order extending down from Jupiter to Aeolus Juno arrives and induces Aeolus to unleash the winds on Aeneas' fleet, building upon prior favours granted and the promise of a beautiful and fertile bride (Fig. 1).

The release of penned-up chaotic energy ignites the narrative, and Juno then ensures that the *Aeneid* keeps going until the (bitter) end. A striking lexical reminiscence links the cave of the winds to the showdown between Aeneas and Turnus in Book 12 and the very last lines of the epic. The portrayal of the winds as *indignantēs* prefigures the death of Turnus at 12.951–2:

> ast illī soluuntur frīgore membra
> uītaque cum gemitū fugit <u>indignāta</u> sub umbrās.

12 The winds have the upper hand in terms of participles: *luctantīs* (53) and *indignantēs* (55) versus *tenēns* (58).

The last line scans – uu | – uu | – uu | – – | – uu | – –, with the lone spondaic fourth foot (*indig-*, with the word continuing in the fifth with a third long syllable *-nā-*) enacting the momentary struggle of Turnus clinging to life before he breathes his last. But whereas in *indignantēs* the clash between ictus (*-dig-*, *-tēs*) and word-accent (*-nan-*) remains unresolved, the same is not the case with *indignāta*: the ictus on *in-* is out of line with the accent, but in the case of *-nā-* ictus and word-accent mercifully coincide. The energy of the epic is finally spent, even if, as Turnus would insist, very little is truly settled.

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Fig. 1: Eneide, Suite de compositions dessinées au trait par Anne Louis Girodet-Trioson. Lithograph (1827). Juno asking Aeolus to unleash the winds, © The Trustees of the British Museum, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1888-0117-8-1-83.

Illustration of *Aeneid* 1.65–83 (Juno speaking): 'Aeolus – for to you the father of gods and king of men has given power to calm and uplift the waves with the wind – a people hateful to me sails the Tyrrhenian Sea, carrying into Italy Ilium's vanquished gods. Hurl fury into your winds, sink and overwhelm the ships, or drive the men asunder and scatter their bodies on the deep. Twice seven nymphs have I of wondrous beauty, of whom Deiopea, fairest of form, I will link to you in sure wedlock, making her yours for ever, that for such service of yours she may spend all her years with you, and make you father of fair offspring.' Thus answered Aeolus: 'Your task, O queen, is to search out your desire; my duty is to do your bidding. To your grace I owe all this my realm, to your grace my sceptre and Jove's favour; you grant me a couch at the feasts of the gods and make me lord of clouds and storms.' So he spoke and, turning his spear, smote the hollow mount on its side; when lo! the winds, as if in armed array, rush forth where passage is given, and blow in storm blasts across the world.'

Essay 2: Historiographical Dido[1]

It is a sober truth: most of the literary production of Greek and Roman antiquity has vanished beyond recovery. Before the advent of printing and the possibility of mechanical reproduction or, more recently, the IT-revolution and the attendant explosion in storage capacity, the transmission of a Greek or Latin text depended on painstaking transcription by hand, letter by letter, word by word, copy by copy. The labour-intensity of this process entailed a high degree of discrimination: premodern cultures picked and chose those texts for copying and transmission they wished to preserve and cultivate for a particular purpose, consigning others, which they considered less important, to the margins. Copies of works that did not attract continuous (or renewed) attention mouldered away in libraries or private collections before eventually disappearing altogether. The remaining corpus of Greek and Roman texts is thus highly selective. And certain works that have survived in full occupy privileged places in our cultural memory, exercising a special power over our minds and imagination. They continue to dominate the conversation – often from a position of greater hegemony than they had initially since alternative voices that once challenged or even contradicted them have long since been silenced and forgotten. Such 'canonical' texts frequently determine which mythic variant or interpretation of a legendary figure enjoy privileged status within a cultural tradition even when the version they broadcast constituted, at the time of composition, a sharp departure from orthodoxy.

The 'correct' version of a traditional story of course does not exist. Authors working with legendary tales had sufficient creative license to

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give their subject matter the spin and imprint that suited their purpose. Yet even though myth-historical material offers a fluid medium for the literary imagination at play, authors frequently endowed their literary works with a claim to (some kind of) truth. Virgil is no exception: the *Aeneid* presents itself as (a version of) history, articulated by means of the conventions of epic. The chosen genre meant, for instance, that Virgil could include anthropomorphic divinities among his cast of characters without raising the eyebrows of his audience: the Olympic gods are a conventional feature of epic story-telling, and for his early readers their appearance as such did not necessarily compromise the historical or referential value of other aspects of his narrative. But ancient commentators considered certain aspects of his literary world profoundly problematic precisely because the *Aeneid* operates under the pretence of presenting a historical account. The fourth-century commentator Servius, for instance, rebuked him for including episodes – such as the transformation of Aeneas' ships into sea-nymphs at *Aeneid* 9.77–122 – that blatantly defy basic principles of empirical plausibility and are thus evidently bogus. Unlike anthropomorphic divinities, marvellous metamorphoses, at least according to some readers, violated epic decorum.

Criticisms such as Servius's drive home the point that the *Aeneid* was expected to conform to certain standards of empiricism and veracity. And in practice Virgil's epic taught generations of Roman school children (something about) their history: a repository of facts and figures about the Roman past, idiosyncratically plotted, to be sure, but of (some) historical value.[2] This, one could assume, holds especially true of the Dido episode. In Book 4, after all, Virgil offers a mythic aetiology ('an explanation of the causes') of indisputably historical events: Rome's enmity with Carthage and the protracted struggle between the two cities over supremacy in the Western Mediterranean in the third and second century BCE.[3] This history of hostilities produced one of Rome's most lethal foes: Hannibal. He is the avenger Dido conjures as part of

2 In terms of historical accuracy, the *Aeneid* invites comparative study alongside such wilful retellings of history as W. C. Sellar's & R. J. Yeatman's *1066 and All That: A Memorable History of England, comprising all the parts you can remember, including 103 Good Things, 5 Bad Kings and 2 Genuine Dates* (1930).

3 See Chapter 8: Quinn.

her suicide curse at 4.607–29. The meeting between Dido and Aeneas thus prefigures and explains important events in Roman history and therefore, by implication, stakes a claim to historical truth. But if one sniffs around in the margins of the canonical mainstream, it is possible to discover an alternative tradition – a tradition, in fact, that claims that Virgil made this part of his epic all up, in defiance of the truth (or orthodoxy). This essay looks at some little-read authors (some of whom have only survived in fragments or digest-form), who preserve traces of this alternative tradition. Not all of them are easy to get hold of, and I have therefore cited the key texts or passages both in the original and in translation to facilitate further engagement with this fascinating if obscure material.[4]

Let us begin with Macrobius, an intellectual snob from late antiquity, and author of the *Sāturnālia*, 'an encyclopedic compilation quarried from mostly unnamed sources ... and cast as a dialogue that gathers together members of the Roman aristocracy prominent in the late fourth century, along with their learned entourage, to discuss matters ridiculous and sublime, and above all the poetry of Virgil.'[5] Eustathius, one of the speakers in the dialogue, has the following to say about Virgil's account of Dido (*Sāturnālia* 5.17.4–6):[6]

> ... bene in rem suam uertit quidquid ubicumque inuēnit imitandum; adeō ut dē Argonauticōrum quārtō, quōrum scrīptor est Apollōnius, librum Aenēïdos suae quārtum tōtum paene fōrmāuerit, ad Dīdōnem uel Aenēān amātōriam incontinentiam Mēdēae circā Iāsonem trāsferendō. quod ita ēlegantius auctōre digessit, ut *fābula lascīuientis Dīdōnis, quam falsam nōuit ūniuersitās, per tot tamen saecula speciem uēritātis obtineat* et ita prō uērō per ōra omnium uolitet, ut pictōrēs fictōrēsque et quī figmentīs līciōrum contextās imitantur effigiēs, hāc māteriā uel maximē in effigiandīs simulācrīs tamquam ūnicō argūmentō decoris ūtantur, nec minus histriōnum perpetuīs et gestibus et cantibus celebrētur. tantum ualuit pulchritūdō nārrandī ut *omnēs Phoenīssae castitātis*

4 I nevertheless proceed selectively. For a more comprehensive account and more detailed discussion of this alternative tradition, see Lord 1969, as well as Horsfall 1990, Hexter 1992, and Davidson 1998.

5 Kaster 2011, vol. 1, xii.

6 Text and translation are from Kaster 2011 (Loeb).

> *cōnsciī*, *nec ignārī manum sibi iniēcisse rēgīnam*, *ne paterētur damnum pudōris*, cōnīueant tamen fābulae, et intrā cōnscientiam uērī fidem prementēs mālint prō uērō celebrārī quod pectoribus hūmānīs dulcēdō fingentis īnfūdit.
>
> [... he nicely adapted to his own purposes whatever he found that was worth imitating, from any and every source, going so far as to virtually shape the whole of the *Aeneid*'s fourth book on the model of Book 4 of the *Argonautica* by Apollonius, assigning to Dido or Aeneas the unrestrained love that Medea bore for Jason. Our author treated that theme so subtly that *the story of Dido lost in passion, which everyone knows is not true, has for so many generations now maintained the appearance of truth*, and so flits about on the lips of men as though it were true, that painters and sculptors and the weavers of tapestries use this above all as their raw material in fashioning their images, as though it were the unique pattern of beauty, and it is no less constantly celebrated in the gestures and songs of actors. The story's beauty has had such power that though *everyone knows of the Phoenician queen's chastity and is aware that she took her own life to avoid the loss of her honor*, they nonetheless wink at the tale, keep their loyalty to the truth to themselves, and prefer to celebrate as true the sweetness that the artist instilled in human hearts.]

This remarkable text voices pronounced anti-Virgilian sentiments: Macrobius' character begins by blaming Virgil with a large-scale act of 'plagiarism': the poet, he claims, modelled his Dido episode on Apollonius Rhodius' account of Jason and Medea in *Argonautica* 4. (The Greek poet lived in the first half of the third century BCE.) This, to be sure, is standard fare in ancient literary criticism. According to Donatus' *Life of Virgil* 46, detractors accused the poet already during his lifetime of thieving from Homer. (Virgil is said to have rebutted charges of literary theft by claiming that it is more difficult to steal the club of Hercules than a line from Homer.) But then Macrobius' speaker ups the ante. In construing the encounter of Dido and Aeneas in analogy to that of Medea and Jason, Virgil, he submits, showed a brazen disregard for historical truth. What is more: *everyone* (he claims) knows that Virgil's version does not correspond to the facts. It is a *fraudulent* fiction. Switching to a 'reader-

response' perspective, Macrobius' character proceeds to comment on the seductive allure that Virgil's poetry exercises over the minds of those who get swept away by his narrative. The *Aeneid* (and *Aeneid* 4 in particular) is so sweet and compelling from a human-interest point of view that readers gladly connive in Virgil's distortions of the truth. Against their better judgment and knowledge, they suspend their commitment to historical veracity, preferring instead to celebrate as true what is mere invention.

Virgil, according to Macrobius, is thus little better than his figure of *Fāma*. In fact, the formulation that Virgil's made-up story 'flits about on the lips of men as though it were true' (*prō uērō per ōra omnium uolitet*) recalls Virgil's characterization of *Fama*. 'Clinging to the false and wrong, yet heralding truth' (4.188*tam fictī prāuīque tenāx quam nūntia uērī*), the foul goddess spreads her rumours everywhere upon the lips of men (4.195*haec passim dea foeda uirum diffundit in ōra*).[7] Still, both for readers weaned on Virgil or for us who are fully aware of the great pliability of myth, the idiom of truth in the cited passage may well baffle. As Kaster remarks in a footnote of his Loeb edition, Macrobius here 'speaks, a bit oddly, as though there were a "true" story of Dido independent of the poetic version.'[8]

In fact, there arguably was – at least for some readers. A contemporary of Macrobius, the church father Jerome (347–420), gives us a hint of this alternative tradition, which preserved the 'true' story of Dido. In his treatise *Against Iovinianus*, he has the following to say about the foundress of Carthage (*Adversus Iovinianum* 1.43 = *Patrologia Latīna* 23. 310):

> Dīdō, soror Pygmaliōnis, multō aurī et argentī pondere congregātō, in Āfricam nāuigāuit, ibīque urbem Carthāginem condidit, et cum ab Jarbā rēge Libyae in conjugium peterētur, paulīsper distulit nūptiās, dōnec conderet cīuitātem. nec multō post exstrūctā in memoriam marītī quondam Sichaeī pyrā, māluit ārdēre quam nūbere. casta mulier Carthāginem condidit...

7 Both passages play off an epitaph of Ennius (239–c. 169 BCE), *Varia* 17–18 Vahlen² *nēmō mē lacrimīs decoret nec fūnera flētū | faxit. cūr? uolitō uīuos per ōra uirum* 'Let none honour me with tears nor prepare my funeral while weeping. Why? I fly alive on the lips of men', which Virgil already imitated at *Georgics* 3.9: ... *uictorque uirum uolitāre per ōra* '[a path must be attempted whereby I may] fly victoriously on the lips of men'.

8 Kaster 2011, vol. 2, 409 n. 62.

> [After Dido, sister of Pygmalion, had collected a great weight of gold and silver, she sailed to Africa and there founded the city of Carthage. When she was sought in marriage by Iarbas, king of Libya, she put off the wedding for a little while until she had founded her city. Not long after, having erected a pyre to the memory of her former husband Sychaeus, she preferred 'to burn rather than to marry'. A chaste woman founded Carthage...]

Many of the plot elements are familiar from Virgil. In both authors, Dido is the sister of Pygmalion and the former wife of the deceased Sychaeus, arrives in Africa on ships laden with riches (especially gold), founds the city of Carthage, is wooed by the local king Iarbas, and ends up committing suicide after erecting a pyre under false pretense. But Jerome's version features a glaring absence. Where in the world is Aeneas in *his* story? How could Jerome pass over the Virgilian protagonist in complete silence? And doesn't Dido's erotic escapade with the Trojan prince fatally compromise her reputation as a 'chaste woman' (*casta mulier*)? Jerome, clearly, neither cares for the *Aeneid* nor seems to be worried about upsetting readers familiar with Virgil's version of Dido. His heroine dies without having met Aeneas and with her reputation and sense of shame intact. Indeed, according to Jerome, Dido committed suicide not because she lost her *pudor*, in an act of wrathful vengeance, madness, and regret, but *to preserve* her chastity and remain loyal to her dead husband.[9]

Jerome – he, that is, who carried his library of pagan classics with him on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem and suffered from nightmares in which he saw himself getting whipped by Christ for the inordinate pleasure he took in Cicero's prose style ('You are a Ciceronian, not a Christian', the son of God rebukes him while administering the punishment, combining the whipping with a good tongue-lashing) – Jerome of course knew his Virgil inside out.[10] The fact that he could conceive of Dido as a *casta mulier*, a model of chastity, in the teeth of *Aeneid* 4 is remarkable. It indicates that he considered an alternative variant of the Dido-story more plausible, more historical, more serious than the one we find in Virgil.

Jerome's rejection of Virgil's figure of Dido in the *Adversus-Iovinianum* passage works by implication only. He just ignores *Aeneid* 4

9 Jerome is not the only church father who hails Dido as an *exemplum castitātis* 'a paragon of chastity'. See also Tertullian (c. 160–c. 225), *Dē Monogamiā* 17.

10 Jerome, *Epistle* 22.30. For an on-line English translation of this letter see *The Christian Classics Ethereal Library* at http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.v.XXII.html.

as if it had never been written, much less enshrined in the Roman school curriculum, without any apparent need for argument or justification. The anonymous author of the following epigram from the so-called *Appendix Planūdea* is less reticent (= *Anthologia Graeca* 16.151):[11]

Εἰς εἰκόνα Διδοῦς

Ἀρχέτυπον Διδοῦς ἐρικυδέος, ὦ ξένε, λεύσσεις,
εἰκόνα θεσπεσίῳ κάλλεϊ λαμπομένην.
τοίη καὶ γενόμην, ἀλλ' οὐ νόον, οἷον ἀκούεις,
ἔσχον, ἐπ' εὐφήμοις δόξαν ἐνεγκαμένη.
οὐδὲ γὰρ Αἰνείαν ποτ' ἐσέδρακον, οὐδὲ χρόνοισι
Τροίης περθομένης ἤλυθον ἐς Λιβύην·
ἀλλὰ βίας φεύγουσα Ἰαρβαίων ὑμεναίων
πῆξα κατὰ κραδίης φάσγανον ἀμφίτομον.
Πιερίδες, τί μοι αἰνὸν[12] ἐφωπλίσσασθε Μάρωνα;
οἷα καθ' ἡμετέρης ψεύσατο σωφροσύνης.

[*On a Painting of Dido*: You look upon, stranger, the exact likeness of far-famed Dido, a portrait shining with divine beauty. Even so I was, but did *not* have the character of which you hear, having rather gained a good reputation for honourable deeds. Neither did I ever set eyes on Aeneas nor did I reach Libya at the time Troy was sacked. Rather, to escape a forced marriage to Iarbas I plunged the two-edged sword into my heart. Muses, why did you arm dread Virgil against me? How he has lied about my virtue!]

The poem imagines a scenario in which a traveller comes by a visual representation of Dido (a statue or painting) that portrays her as she *really* was (that seems to be the meaning of the Greek Ἀρχέτυπον, from which the English word 'archetype' derives). The portrait then begins to address the viewer in Dido's voice, claiming for her(self) an unblemished reputation, on the grounds that she committed suicide to

11 The *Appendix Planūdea* is a collection of Greek epigrams and poems compiled by the Byzantine scholar Maximus Planudes, who lived from c. 1260–c. 1305 (hence *Planūdea*) but mostly written much earlier. They then got attached, or appended (hence *Appendix*), to another collection of such poems, which is today known under the name of *Greek Anthology* (or *Anthologia Graeca*). The text and translation are from the Loeb Classical Library, slightly adjusted.

12 An alternative reading is ἀγνὸν 'chaste'. Both attributes are attractive: αἰνός 'dread' puns on Aeneas, ἁγνός 'chaste, pure' hints at Virgil's authorial self-fashioning as a *uātēs* (*pius*), here of course dripping with sarcasm.

avoid being wedded by force to her African suitor Iarbas. In essence, we here have the same variant that Jerome, too, endorsed. But in our epigram, Dido does not simply assert an alternative truth; she also aggressively defends herself against Virgilian slander. What we read in the *Aeneid*, she points out, is all wrong: on simple chronological grounds, she could never have met the Trojan hero. In lines that are reminiscent of Macrobius' point that Virgil's poetry is emotionally and aesthetically so compelling that readers are willing to take his inventions for the truth, the speaking portrait ends with blaming the Muses for aiding Virgil in his smear campaign. Virgil, in short, is a seductively persuasive liar!

An anonymous author rendered a version of this Greek epigram into Latin. The translation was at some point ascribed to the poet Ausonius (c. 310–395) and transmitted as part of his *oeuvre* (hence pseudo-Ausonius, *Epigrams* 118):[13]

ILLA ego sum Dīdō, uultū quem cōnspicis, hospes,
  assimilāta modīs pulcraque mīrificīs.
tālis eram, sed nōn Maro quam mihi fīnxit erat mēns
  uīta nec incestīs laesa cupīdinibus.
namque nec Aenēās uīdit mē Trōïus umquam
  nec Libyam aduēnit classibus Īliacīs,
sed furiās fugiēns atque arma procācis Hiarbae
  seruāuī, fateor, morte pudīcitiam,
pectore trānsfīxō, castus quod perculit ēnsis,
  non furor aut laesō crūdus amōre dolor.
sīc cecidisse iuuat: uīxī sine uulnere fāmae,
  ulta uirum positīs moenibus oppetiī.
inuida, cūr in mē stimulāstī, Mūsa, Marōnem.
  fingeret ut nostrae damna pudīcitiae?
uōs magis historicīs, lēctōrēs, crēdite dē mē
  quam quī fūrta deum concubitūsque canunt
falsidicī uātēs, temerant quī carmine uērum
  hūmānīsque deōs assimilant uitiīs.

[That one, which you look at, traveller, am I, Dido, reproduced in wonderful ways and beautiful. I was such a person, and did not

13 The Latin text is available in Garrod 1912.

> possess the mind that Maro (= Virgil) invented for me nor was my life tarnished by illicit desires.[14] For Trojan Aeneas never saw me nor reached Libya with his Trojan fleet, but fleeing the furies and the arms of pushy Iarbas, I preserved – I confess – my sense of shame through death, with my heart stabbed through, which a sword struck that was chaste, not madness or raw grief after my love suffered harm. Thus, it pleases to have fallen: I lived without any damage to my reputation, and having exacted revenge, after construction of the walls, met my death. Jealous Muse, why did you goad on Virgil against me so that he invented damages to my sense of shame? *You, readers, believe rather the historians about me than the lying poets who sing of secret affairs and the sexual liaisons of the gods, who besmear the truth in their poems and assimilate the gods to human sins*.]

This Latin version closely follows the Greek original but concludes with a telling elaboration (put in italics): Dido pleads with us readers to believe the story that *historians* tell about her and not the one promulgated by 'lying poets'. She uses a generic plural and includes a wholesale condemnation of the literary (and especially epic) tradition of anthropomorphic divinities but pointedly employs the term for poets that Virgil used of himself, *uātēs*. Indeed, the phrase *falsidicī uātēs* 'lying poets' is a bitter transmogrification of the Virgilian phrase *fātidicī uātēs* 'poet-prophets speaking of historical destiny' at *Aeneid* 8.340.

Who, exactly, are the historians we are supposed to consult? A passage in an anonymous treatise that we are unable to date with precision entitled *Dē Mulieribus* ('On Powerful Women') contains a decisive piece of information:[15]

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14 Virgil's full name was Pūblius Vergilius Maro.

15 The standard treatment of the *Dē Mulieribus* is Gera 1997. Since the author of the treatise here cites or summarizes the Greek historiographer Timaeus, the text is also available in Brill's New Jacoby project, a (recently concluded) re-edition of the collection of the fragments of the Greek historians by the German scholar Felix Jacoby (1876–1959), *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, under BNJ 566 F 82 (where BNJ = Brill's New Jacoby; 566 = the number of the historian, i.e. Timaeus; F = fragment; 82 = the number of the fragment). I cite the BNJ text and translation (slightly adjusted). See further Haegemans 2000.

> Θειοσσώ. ταύτην φησὶ Τίμαιος κατὰ μὲν τὴν Φοινίκων γλώσσαν Ἐλίσσαν καλεῖσθαι, ἀδελφὴν δὲ εἶναι Πυγμαλίωνος τοῦ Τυρίων βασιλέως, ὑφ᾽ ἧς φησι τὴν Καρχηδόνα τὴν ἐν Λιβύηι κτισθῆναι· τοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς ὑπὸ τοῦ Πυγμαλίωνος ἀναιρεθέντος, ἐνθεμένη τὰ χρήματα εἰς σκάφας μετά τινων πολιτῶν ἔφευγε, καὶ πολλὰ κακοπαθήσασα τῆι Λιβύηι προσηνέχθη, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Λιβύων διὰ τὴν πολλὴν αὐτῆς πλάνην Δειδὼ προσηγορεύθη ἐπιχωρίως. κτίσασα δὲ τὴν προειρημένην πόλιν, τοῦ τῶν Λιβύων βασιλέως θέλοντος αὐτὴν γῆμαι, αὐτὴ μὲν ἀντέλεγεν, ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν πολιτῶν συναναγκαζομένη, σκηψαμένη τελετήν τινα πρὸς ἀνάλυσιν ὅρκων ἐπιτελέσειν, πυρὰν μεγίστην ἐγγὺς τοῦ οἴκου κατασκευάσασα καὶ ἅψασα, ἀπὸ τοῦ δώματος αὐτὴν εἰς τὴν πυρὰν ἔρριψεν.
>
> [Theiosso: Timaios says this was what Elissa was called in Phoenician – she being the sister of Pygmalion, king of Tyre. And he says that she founded Carthage in Libya. When her husband was killed by Pygmalion, she put her possessions on shipboard and fled with some of the citizens, coming to Libya after great hardship. Because of her extensive wanderings, she was called 'Deido' by the Libyans in their local language. Once she had founded the aforementioned city, the king of Libya desired her as wife, but she refused him. She was, however, pressured by her citizens. On a pretext of performing a ritual to free herself from her oaths (not to marry), she constructed a large pyre by her house; when it had been lighted, she threw herself from her abode onto the pyre.]

With Timaios (or, in Latin spelling, Timaeus), we are leaving behind the world of late antiquity. The Greek historiographer lived from 356–260 BCE, about 250 years before Virgil. And his account of the Dido story clearly stands behind, but in essential details differs radically from, the one we find in the *Aeneid*: in both authors Dido is also known as Elissa; in both authors, her original home was the city of Tyre in Phoenicia; in both authors, she is the sister of Pygmalion; in both authors, her brother Pygmalion killed her husband; in both authors, she collected possessions and assembled a group of citizens after the killing, fleeing her hometown

and arriving as an exile in Libya; in both authors, she founded the city of Carthage; in both authors, a local king desired her to be his wife; in both authors, she refused to yield; in both authors, she decided to commit suicide; in both authors, she concealed her purpose behind fake-preparation for a magic ritual that involved construction of a pyre. But here the parallels end: in Timaeus, she commits suicide because she is determined to *preserve* her oath of chastity to her murdered husband; in Virgil, she commits suicide at least in part because she *violates* her oath of chastity to her murdered husband. Accordingly, in Timaeus the pretext for building the pyre consists in the apparent need to perform a ritual that would have freed her from the obligations of her oaths not ever to remarry, whereas in Virgil it is to rid herself of her fateful love for Aeneas.

One may legitimately wonder: what about Aeneas? Why doesn't Timaeus mention him? For those steeped in the chronology of Greek myth that Timaeus presupposes the answer is straightforward: Dido and Aeneas could not have met since they lived about three centuries apart! The evidence for this salient detail comes from another obscure and difficult source, the *Philippic History* of the first-century BCE historian Pompeius Trogus, a contemporary of Virgil's, which has only survived in the form of extracts by Justin (who may have lived in the late second century CE) entitled *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus*. At 18.4.1–6.8, Justin recounts the story of Dido, in the Timaean tradition, according to the following chronology (all dates are BCE):[16]

1195:	Founding of Tyre
1194:	Fall of Troy
c. 830:	King Mutto of Tyre dies, having appointed as his heirs his son Pygmalion and his daughter Elissa (a.k.a. Dido); Pygmalion becomes sole king and murders Elissa's husband (their uncle) Acherbas (in Virgil his name is Sychaeus) because of his wealth
c. 815:	Elissa/ Dido flees Tyre with Acherbas' riches and reaches Libya
814:	Founding of Carthage
753:	Founding of Rome

16 For the Latin text see Seel 1972, for a translation Yardley 1994.

According to this timeline, Aeneas had long since reached Italy before Dido ever set foot on African shores. For the two to meet, Virgil had to predate her arrival in Libya by roughly four centuries. Here we have the final piece of evidence needed to put Virgil in the dock for theft and slander – or to use a literary-critical, rather than legal idiom, co-option and correction, appropriation and adaptation. Virgil took over the basic plot of the Dido story from the Greek myth-historical tradition represented by Timaeus and adjusted orthodox chronology so he could engineer a love affair between Dido and Aeneas. This involved turning on its head the traditional reputation of the queen, who was renowned for her unconditional loyalty to her husband Sychaeus and remained committed to chastity till the bitter end.

In so doing, he might have followed Naevius (c. 270–201 BCE), who wrote a poem about Rome's first war with Carthage, the *Bellum Pūnicum*, which perhaps included an encounter (without the love affair) between Dido and Aeneas.[17] But even if a precedent existed, this variant did not become mainstream. Virgil's contemporary Livy, writing the early books of his Roman history *Ab Vrbe Conditā* at the same time as Virgil composed the *Aeneid*, brings Aeneas to Italy without a sojourn in Carthage. And even after Virgil, historiographers of the Augustan age keep Dido out of their version of the Aeneas legend.[18]

17 The fragmentary and paratextual evidence remains inconclusive (Horsfall 1990: 138–9). Discussions include Giusti 2017: 140 n. 38 (coming down in favour of Naevian precedent) and Barchiesi 2021: 19–20 (rejecting the possibility). See now also Gaertner 2025a, 2025b, who argues that an 'older "vulgate" version of the Aeneas myth that is preserved by Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the *Orīgō gentis Rōmānae* aligns more consistently [than Virgil's *Aeneid*] with the fragments of the *Bellum Pūnicum* and thus provides a closer and more plausible match.' In his reconstruction of Naevius' legendary material, 'the storm mentioned by Macrobius must have carried Naevius' Aeneas to Sicily, not Africa, and both the storm and the landing in Sicily were intended to mirror the dramatic naval disasters of the First Punic War and reinforce Rome's claim to the Mediterranean island. Furthermore, Virgil did not inherit the encounter of Aeneas and Dido from Naevius but created it independently drawing heavily on Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*' (2025b: 241).

18 Hexter 1992: 367: 'stories about Aeneas varied widely and drastically during Virgil's lifetime, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, writing in Greek at Rome, noted already ca. 7 BCE. (e.g., *Roman Antiquities* 1.48–49, 53.4, 72–73). Neither Dionysius (1.47–53) nor another contemporary of Vergil, Livy, writing in Latin (*Ab urbe conditā*, 1.1), includes a Carthaginian stopover on Aeneas' way from Troy to Italy.' Poets, of course, are a different matter, starting with Ovid, who warmly embraces Virgil's myth-making (esp. *Hērōidēs* 7 and *Metamorphōsēs* 14, but also *Fāstī* 3.545–656 and elsewhere).

It is time to summarize the most important findings and to set the stage for further discussion:

1. Besides Virgil's account of Dido, another, older version of her story circulated in antiquity, which can be traced back to the Greek historiographer Timaeus who wrote in the third century BCE.

2. Virgil crafted his figure of Dido with the Timaean version in mind but altered chronology so that Dido could welcome Aeneas at Carthage and be forced to fall madly in love with him. The ensuing transmogrification of her traditional character is profound: instead of a queen who prefers to die rather than remarry, we get a woman on fire with love who throws oaths and caution to the wind in succumbing to desire.

3. Virgil's radical revision of the Dido-myth eventually came to eclipse the original variant, owing to the success enjoyed by the *Aeneid* from the day it was first put into circulation. But some readers in antiquity (and beyond: see below) have resisted the allure of Virgil's poetry. And with a bit of sleuthing and rummaging in the debris of literary history, we are still able to recover a Dido untainted by Virgil's lurid imagination. It is a Dido that appealed to a range of authors who considered the Timaean variant to be historically accurate, indeed true – as opposed to Virgil's account, which they dismissed as malicious slander.

4. Knowledge of the Timaean tradition draws attention to a meta-dramatic dimension of *Aeneid* 4. Dido's struggle against the influence of Venus and Cupid and the erotic allure that Aeneas embodies simultaneously amounts to resistance to Virgil's efforts to wrest her from a pre-existing tradition and inflict on her a new literary identity. In meta-literary terms, Dido wishes to stay true to her earlier, historiographical self, but ultimately succumbs to Virgil's (and Venus') limey plot. Just as the goddess of erotic desire and her two sons Cupid and Aeneas get Dido to give in to temptation, Virgil tries to seduce his readers to embrace (fall in love with?) *his* version of the Dido legend. Over time, very few have managed to resist the enticement of his poetry. But the historiographical Dido of chastity preserved through suicide continued to hold sway in patristic circles, before being revived by Petrarch and Boccaccio.

5. The recovery of the 'historical' Dido raises complex issues around (changing) notions of historical veracity, poetic license, the power of canonical texts, the seductive allure of sublime poetry, the question of historical justice for legendary characters, and the potential non-alignment of truth and beauty, ethics and art.

Appendix: Historiographical and Virgilian Dido in Early-Modern Times (and a textual crux)

The Dido of Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), the first author of a vernacular poem of epic scale, is the Dido of Virgil. In his *Divine Comedy*, which traces an autobiographical journey from Hell to Heaven via Purgatory, Dante locates her in the 'circle of lust' of *Inferno* 5, fittingly, from a Virgilian point of view, alongside Cleopatra (61–3):[19]

> L'altra è colei che s'ancise amorosa,
> e ruppe fede al cener di Sicheo;
> poi è Cleopatràs lussurïosa.
>
> [Here is she who broke faith with the ashes of Sichaeus and slew herself for love. The next is wanton Cleopatra.]

Given that Virgil is Dante's guide through Hell and that he hails Virgil in their initial meeting as 'my master and my author(ity)' (*Inf.* 1.85 *lo mio maestro e il mio autore*), this comes as no surprise, even though such apparent self-subordination ought not to obfuscate his ambition to outdo his predecessor. But rather than challenging

19 Text and translation are taken from The Princeton Dante Project (https://dante.princeton.edu/pdp/). Dido is named explicitly at *Inf.* 5.85. Cf. also *Paradiso* 8.7–9 (in verses about Venus) *ma Dïone onoravano e Cupido, | quella per madre sua, questo per figlio, | e dicean ch'el sedette in grembo a Dido* 'but they honored Dïone, and Cupid too, one as her (= Venus') mother, the other as her son, and told how once he sat in Dido's lap'. See also *Convivio* IV.xxvi.8.

Virgil on Dido, he finds other ways of decentring him, inviting Virgil himself to articulate his inferiority: when he first appears in the *Divine Comedy* he self-identifies as having lived 'at the time of the false and lying gods' (*Inf.* 1.72 *Al tempo degli dei falsi e bugiardi*), that is, without access to Christian truth. On his journey through the beyond, Dante is thus forced (able?) to leave the unbaptised pagan poet behind in Hell (the same place to which Virgil consigned his own predecessors).[20]

By contrast, his near-contemporary Petrarch (1304–1374) chooses to challenge Virgil on Dido. In an aggressive game of one-upmanship, Petrarch validates the historiographical Dido both in his Latin epic *Āfrica*, which contributed to his coronation as poet laureate on Easter Sunday 1341 on Rome's Capitoline Hill, and his vernacular writings. At the outset of the *Āfrica*, Petrarch invokes the Muses, his patron King Robert of Naples, and Jesus Christ as inspirations for a narrative about the Second Punic War with Scipio Africanus Maior as protagonist. The subject matter enables him to move into pre-Virgilian territory and align himself with Ennius, the founding figure of Latin epic. As a 'Prequel of the *Aeneid* for modern times', the *Āfrica* presents as an Oedipal effort to take Virgil down a notch, and the figure of Dido offers an excellent opportunity for meta-literary polemics. Book 3 features a banquet that the Numidian king Syphax holds for Scipio's friend Laelius. While modelled on Dido's welcoming feast for Aeneas in *Aeneid* 1, it provides Petrarch with the occasion to dismiss Virgil's version of the Dido story and re-energize the tradition that considers him a lying poet. An unnamed bard includes a version of the historiographical Dido in his history of Libya, raising in mock-horror (but then instantly dismissing) the 'hypothetical' scenario of a future poet traducing the queen's reputation with stories of lurid lust (*Āfrica* 3.418–29):[21]

20 See Chapter 10: Gildenhard 342.

21 For the *Āfrica* (and Petrarch's Dido), see e.g. Simpson 2005, Regn and Huss 2009, Hardie 2014 and now Agbamu 2026 (which I have not yet seen).

post rēgīna Tyrō fugiēns hīs fīnibus ampla
moenia cōnstrūxit magnam Carthaginis urbem.
ex rē nōmen eī est. mox aspernāta propinquī
coniugium rēgis, cum pūblica uōta suōrum
urgērent, ueteris non immemor illa marītī,
morte pudīcitiam redimit. sīc urbis orīgō
oppetiit rēgīna ferōx. *iniūria quanta*
huic fīat, sī forte aliquis – quod crēdere non est –
ingeniō cōnfīsus erit, quī carmine sacrum
nōmen ad illicitōs lūdēns trādūcat amōrēs!
hīs igitur fundāta modīs urbs tempore crēuit
exiguō...

[Afterwards, the queen, fleeing from Tyre, built spacious walls in these regions, the great city of Carthage, which accounts for its name [Carthage = 'new city']. She then spurned marriage to the neighbouring king; even though the public will of her people urged her on, mindful of her former husband she secured chastity through (self-inflicted) death. Thus, the defiant queen, foundress of her city, met her end. What a great injustice would she suffer if perchance a future someone – a surreal scenario! – will be so confident in his literary genius as to frivolously stain her hallowed name by including a (fake) scandalous affair in his epic song. Founded in such fashion the city grew in a short period of time. …]

Virgil's version of the Dido story is thus flagged up as an incredible outrage by a belated, irresponsible spin-doctor. Unsurprisingly, Dido marches in Petrarch's *Trionfo della Pudicizia* 'Triumph of Chastity' (rather than his *Triumph of Cupid*). He gives her pride of place at the opening, avowing that it was loyal love for her dead husband Sychaeus rather than amorous passion for Aeneas that drove her to suicide:[22]

22 Text and translation are from https://www.petrarch.petersadlon.com/trionfi.html.

Quando ad un giogo ed in un tempo quivi
dòmita l'alterezza degli dèi
e degli uomini vidi al mondo divi,
I' presi esempio de' lor stati rei,
facendo mio profitto l'altrui male
in consolar i casi e i dolor mei;
ché s'io veggio d'un arco e d'uno strale
Febo percosso e 'l giovene d'Abido,
l'un detto deo, l'altro uom puro mortale,
e veggio ad un lacciuol Giunone e Dido,
ch'amor pio del suo sposo a morte spinse,
non quel d'Enea com'è 'l publico grido,
non mi debb'io doler s'altri mi vinse
giovene, incauto, disarmato e solo.

WHEN AT one time and under one same yoke
I saw the pride of gods Olympian
So tamed, and that of men almost divine,
I took example from their sorry state,
Deriving from the sight of their distress
Some consolation for my fated woes.
For if two arrows from a single bow
Can wound Apollo and the young Leander,
One called a god, the other but a man,
And if in a single snare Juno may fall,
And Dido, she whom love for her own spouse
(Not – as they say – for Aeneas) drove to her death,
I should not grieve if I be overcome,
Being young, unarmed, incautious, and alone.

According to Petrarch, a literal-historical reading of Virgilian Dido amounts to a calumny of her character.[23] As Hiatt 2019: 190 sums up:

> Petrarch sought to distinguish two Didos: the real queen of Justinus' epitome of Pompeius Trogus, who had lived around three hundred years after Aeneas, and who had killed herself for love of her husband; and the fictional one in Virgil, whose affair with Aeneas was poetic invention crafted for a moral purpose. This distinction, which had been established for him by Servius, and affirmed by Jerome, Augustine, Macrobius and others, enabled Petrarch to claim Dido as an emblem of marital fidelity, an assertion made most notably in the *Triumphi*, and in the unfinished epic *Africa*, perhaps with an eye to Dante's characterization of Dido as one who 'broke faith with the ashes of Sicheus'.

One of Petrarch's other *Trionfi*, the *Triumph of Fame*, inspired a painting by Titian (c. 1488/1490–576), which in turn served the 18th-century engraver Silvester Pomarede as basis for a composition with the eponymous title, which features Dido in the company of other illustrious mythological, historical, and biblical figures, including Judith, Alexander the Great, and Plato (Fig. 2). Petrarch also seems to have caused a change of mind in his compatriot Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375), who had embraced the Virgilian Dido of love and limerence in his pre–1341 vernacular writings. But his scholarly work in Latin which postdates Petrarch's *Āfrica* (*Dē clārīs mulieribus*,

23 He offers an allegorical interpretation of Virgil's Dido at *Rerum Senilium* 4.5.37–41, where she represents the human condition: we are all in exile.

Dē Cāsibus Virōrum Illūstrium, and certain passages in the *Geneālogie Deōrum*) follows Petrarch in endorsing the historiographical Dido.[24] He even argues that Virgil knew exactly what he was doing in distorting historical truth, though grants him the poetic licence to do so (*Geneālogie* 14.13).

Dido continues with a split or double identity ('Virgilian' and 'historiographical') also after Petrarch and Boccaccio. The *Dido* of Andrea Mantegna (c. 1431–1506) that graces the cover of this volume is a case in point.[25] And the interest in historiographical Dido in early-humanist circles might help to explain a curious crux in an illustration of Dido from the early 16th century. Around 1510, Marcantonio Raimondi (c. 1470/82–c. 1534) executed two engravings based on designs by Raphael (1483–1520): one depicting Lucretia (Fig. 3), the other Dido (Fig. 4), both at the point of committing suicide.[26] Each engraving features an inscription in Greek, seemingly meant to encapsulate the fate of the respective heroine.[27] Lucretia's tag reads: ΑΜΕΙΝΟΝ ΑΠΟΘΝΗΣΚΕΙΝ Η ΑΙΣΡΩΣ ΖΗΝ (Ἀμείνων ἀποθνῄσκειν ἢ αἰσχρῶς ζῆν) 'It is better to die than to live shamefully'; the one for Dido ΑΥΤΥΧΕΙΣ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ ΖΩΗ (αυτυχεις θάνατος ζωή). This is difficult to translate: the word αυτυχεις/*autucheis* does not exist and proposed translations and/ or emendations do not compel.[28] A possible way

24 For the argument that Petrarch's *Āfrica* was the catalyst for Boccaccio's interest in the historiographical Dido see Kallendorf 1989, ch. 3 ('Boccaccio's Two Didos: Virgil, Petrarca, and "Il più grande discepolo"').

25 See Fletcher 2014.

26 Art historians agree that the 'Dido' is less accomplished than the 'Lucretia' but disagree on the reasons: some argue that the Dido is an earlier work (Petrucci 1964: 24, Pon 2004: 95–8, Joannides 2016), others that it is the work of an imitator such as Agostino Veneziano (Emison 1991).

27 Emison 1991: 383 (on Lucretia): 'The Greek motto would have helped to establish Greek tragedy as the proper context for viewing the image' with n. 43: 'It was probably devised for Raphael by Janus Lascaris, a member of the papal circle who wrote a Greek poem in Raphael's honour. See Janus Lascaris, *Epigrammata*, Basel 1537, p. 60 ...' The Greek for Lucretia is notably more accomplished than the one for Dido, also in terms of visual execution (with breathings and accents, both absent in the case of Dido).

28 See e.g. Emison 1991: 391 n. 11, who reads (or emends to) αὐδήεις and glosses as follows: 'The inscription of the Dido ("A famous death lives") is peculiar in orthography and vocabulary. The first word, 'AUDHEIS, is normally used to mean "speaking with a human voice", but a secondary meaning, "famous"

forward may be to emend αυτυχεις (*autucheis*) to εὐτυχής (*eutuchēs*) and translate 'A felicitous death [is] life (= *bona fāma*/ renown).' At least the Greek would make sense and open the design (further) to two contrapuntal readings, depending on whether we see the historiographical or the Virgilian Dido represented: if the former, Dido like Lucretia secures her chastity through suicide; if the latter she is trying to restore her compromised reputation through suicide. Both are possibilities, but the latter seems less well suited to the Greek inscription (if the decipherment proposed is correct): it is difficult to consider the Virgilian Dido's desperate and curse-affiliated death 'felicitous' and associate it with life.

The reception history of the two images attests to the ambiguity of the Dido on display. In the decades following their initial dissemination, the prints acquired Latin distichs imagined as spoken by the heroine (Fig. 5 and Fig. 6). Lucretia laments: *prōh dolor! ā saevō vim sum perpessa tyrannō | vīvere nōn patitur laesa pudīcitia* 'Oh, grief! I have suffered violence from a savage tyrant; injured modesty does not suffer [me] to live'. Dido declares: *Hospes abit: sed ut est extīncta pudōris honestās| mē ferrō extīnctam cōgit inīre rogōs* 'The guest departs; but since the honour of my sense of shame is undone, he forces me, undone by the sword, to enter upon the funeral pyre'. In other words, the Latin addition disambiguates. Whereas the image and the Greek inscription could refer to the historiographical Dido, the Latin epigram renders her unequivocally Virgilian.

The tussle over the 'true' Dido with appeal to ancient and early-modern authorities also registers in the *Prōmptuārius īcōnum īnsigniōrum* (1553) of Guillaume Rouillé (c. 1504–1589), which consists of a compilation of woodcut portraits of famous persons in medallion format alongside short biographies.[29] Rouillé pairs

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came to light in the sole surviving manuscript of Hesychius, a lexicographer of Alexandria. This was published hurriedly by Aldus in August of 1514...' (which she uses as evidence for dating *Dido* after *Lucretia*). She is seemingly followed by Montagu 1998: 137: 'The celebrated death lives'. De Jong 2009: 81 wants to read αὐτόχειρ (*autocheir*) 'A self-afflicted death is life', the meaning of which remains cryptic.

29 The full title is Guillaume Rouillé, *Prīma pars Prōmptuārīī īcōnum īnsigniōrum à seculō hominum, subiectīs eōrum vītīs, per compendium ex probātissimīs autōribus dēsūmptīs*

Sychaeus and Dido and combines information taken from Virgil and Justinian (for Sychaeus) with an endorsement of the historiographical Dido (and an indictment of Virgil) on the authority of Ausonius and Boccaccio (Fig. 7). And there were other ways of distancing the figure from Virgilian traducement, such as a deliberate focus on her heroic founding of Carthage (rather than any love affair or suicide). A marble relief of the sculptor Aurelio Lombardo (1501–1563) (Fig. 8) has been interpreted along those lines: 'Dido is depicted nude, and her wavy hair is worn in loose knots, an allusion to Hellenistic images of Aphrodite. The relief has much in common with ancient Roman funerary stele, but instead of their typically low relief and draped figures, Dido's nude form twists dynamically. Active and defiant, she is the ideal figure to usher in a newly vibrant period of Italian sculpture.'[30]

In more recent times, controversies over which Dido – historiographical or Virgilian? – is the 'genuine' one, seem to have petered out. Reasons may include the impact of influential dramatic re-imaginings based on the *Aeneid*, such as Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragedie of Dido Queene of Carthage* (1594) or Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (1689), which foreground the ill-fated love affair or the rise of modern scholarship and science, which rendered the question of which story of Dido is 'historical' somewhat moot: both versions are now considered the product of mythopoiesis. Virgil's wilful departure from 'historiographical truth', at any rate, no longer seems to stimulate much controversy. His Dido, of course, has remained a controversial figure. But the issues and concerns she raises are, as ever, a-changin' with the times.

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et Prōmptuāriī īcōnum pars secunda incipit ā Chrīstō nātō, perpetuam dūcēns seriem ad ūsque chrīstiānissimum francōrum rēgem Hēnrīcum hōc nōmine secundum, hodiē fēlīciter rēgnantem (1553) 'First part of the storehouse of images of especially famous individuals from the beginning of human history, with their biographies added, taken summarily from the most approved authors, and the second part of the storehouse of images beginning with the birth of Christ, leading in a continuous series up to the most Christian King of the Franks, Henry, the Second of this name, auspiciously reigning today'.

30 Kurkow 2021.

Fama
Famæ triumphus a Franciſco Petrarca primum excogitatus, et fuſo carmine eleganter deſcriptus, in quo compreſſa morte, ſuſcitatiſque virtutibus liberales
Artes ſubjiciuntur, tum illuſtres bello, et pace Viri, tum Latinæ, et Græcæ commendatrices Heroinæ, quarum unaquæque ſuis eſt diſtincta nominibus, ex vetuſto
celeberrimi Titiani Archetypo, quod extat in Ædibus D. Ioannis Michilli Conductoris Generalis Pulveris Nicoſiani, et AquæVitis Status Pontificii

Fig. 2: Silvester Pomarede, illustration of Petrarch's poem/ idea of *The Triumph of Fāma*, after drawing by Gianantonio Buti, after painting by Titian (1750). Rijksmuseum. Object Number RP-P-OB–207.752. Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200625740: 'Fame, a winged woman blowing a trumpet of praise, seated on a triumphal chariot drawn by two lions. Surrounding the chariot is a crowd of mythological, historical, and biblical figures, including Dido, Judith, Alexander the Great, and Plato'. Latin text in the lower margin:

Fāmae triumphus ā Franciscō Petrarca prīmum excōgitātus, et su[s]ō carmine ēleganter dēscrīptus, in quō compressā morte, suscitātīsque virtūtibus līberālēs Artēs subjiciuntur, tum illūstrēs bellō, et pāce Virī, tum Latīnae, et Graecae commendātiōrēs Hērōīnae, quārum ūnaquaeque suīs est distīncta nōminibus, ex vetustō celeberrimī Titiānī Archetypō, quod extat in Aedibus D. Iōannis Michilli Conductōris Generālis Pulveris Nicōsiani, et Aquae Vītis Statūs Pontificiī.

The Triumph of Fame – first conceived by Francis Petrarch and elegantly described in his poem –, in which, with death defeated and the virtues revived, the liberal arts are paraded in succession, alongside men famous for achievements in war and peace and the more distinguished Greek and Latin heroines, each of whom is marked by her name, from the old archetype by the highly celebrated Titian, which is preserved in the house of D. Giovanni Michilli, General Manager of the Powder of Nicosia and of the Water of the Vineyard [?] of the Papal States.

Fig. 3: Marcantonio Raimondi, The Suicide of Lucretia (1509–1514). The Rijksmuseum. Object Number RP-P–1951–575, Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200123664

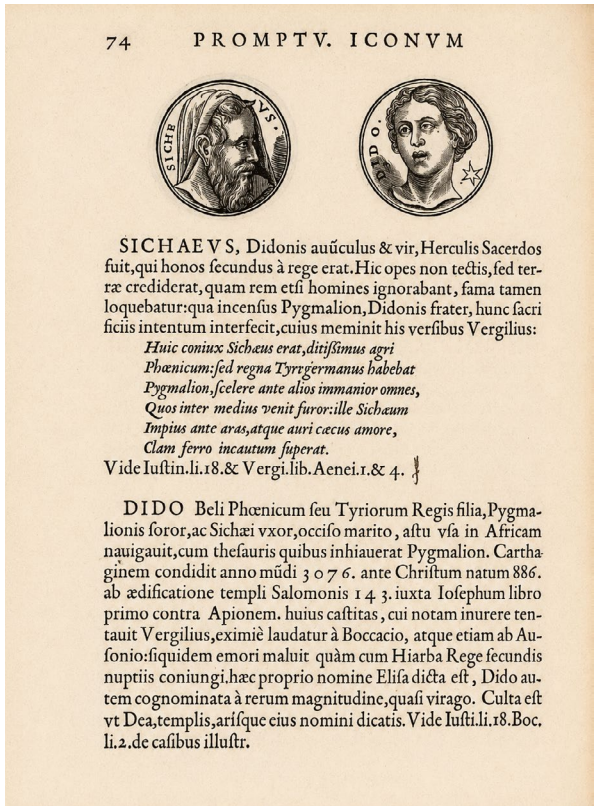
Fig. 4: Marcantonio Raimondi, The Suicide of Dido (1508–1512.) The Rijksmuseum. Object Number RP-P-OB–11.902. Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200123657

Fig. 5 (left): After Raimondi. The Suicide of Lucretia (1509–1560). The Rijksmuseum. Object Number RP-P-OB-11.905. Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200123665

Fig. 6 (right): After Raimondi. The Suicide of Dido (1580). The Rijksmuseum. Object Number RP-P-OB–11.904. Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200123659

(Lucretia): *prōh dolor! ā saevō vim sum perpessa tyrannō | vīvere nōn patitur laesa pudīcitia* 'Oh, grief! I have suffered violence from a savage tyrant; injured modesty does not suffer [me] to live'.

(Dido): *Hospes abit: sed ut est extīncta pudōris honestās| mē ferrō extīnctam cōgit inīre rogōs* 'The guest departs; but since the honour of my sense of shame is undone, he forces me, undone by the sword, to enter upon the funeral pyre'.



74 PROMPTV. ICONVM

SICHAEVS, Didonis auũculus & vir, Herculis Sacerdos fuit, qui honos ſecundus à rege erat. Hic opes non tectis, ſed terræ crediderat, quam rem etſi homines ignorabant, fama tamen loquebatur: qua incenſus Pygmalion, Didonis frater, hunc ſacrificiis intentum interfecit, cuius meminit his verſibus Vergilius:

Huic coniux Sichæus erat, ditiſſimus agri
Phœnicum: ſed regna Tyrrgermanus habebat
Pygmalion, ſcelere ante alios immanior omnes,
Quos inter medius venit furor: ille Sichæum
Impius ante aras, atque auri cæcus amore,
Clam ferro incautum ſuperat.

Vide Iuſtin. li. 18. & Vergi. lib. Aenei. 1. & 4.

DIDO Beli Phœnicum ſeu Tyriorum Regis filia, Pygmalionis ſoror, ac Sichæi vxor, occiſo marito, aſtu vſa in Africam nauigauit, cum theſauris quibus inhiauerat Pygmalion. Carthaginem condidit anno mũdi 3076. ante Chriſtum natum 886. ab ædificatione templi Salomonis 143. iuxta Ioſephum libro primo contra Apionem. huius caſtitas, cui notam inurere tentauit Vergilius, eximiè laudatur à Boccacio, atque etiam ab Auſonio: ſiquidem emori maluit quàm cum Hiarba Rege ſecundis nuptiis coniungi. hæc proprio nomine Eliſa dicta eſt, Dido autem cognominata à rerum magnitudine, quaſi virago. Culta eſt vt Dea, templis, ariſque eius nomini dicatis. Vide Iuſti. li. 18. Boc. li. 2. de caſibus illuſtr.

Fig. 7: Guillaume Rouillé, *Prōmptuārius īcōnum īnsigniōrum* (1553), https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_f5FDAAAAcAAJ/page/n87/mode/2up

Transcription and Translation:

SICHAEVS, Dīdōnis auunculus & vir, Herculis Sacerdōs fuit, quī honōs secundus ā rēge erat. Hic opēs nōn tēctīs, sed terrae crēdiderat, quam rem etsī hominēs īgnōrābant, fāma tamen loquēbātur: quā incēnsus Pygmalion, Dīdōnis frater, hunc sacrificiīs intentum interfēcit, cuius meminit hīs versibus Vergilius:

huic coniūnx Sychaeus erat, dītissimus agrī
Phoenīcum: sed rēgna Tyrī germānus habēbat
Pygmaliōn, scelere ante aliōs immānior omnēs,
quōs inter medius uēnit furor: ille Sychaeum
impius ante ārās atque aurī caecus amōre,
clam ferrō incautum superat.

Vidē Iūstīn. li. 18. & Vergi. lib. Aenei. 1. & 4.

[Sychaeus, Dido's maternal uncle and husband, was a priest of Hercules. He ranked second after the king. He had entrusted his wealth not to his domicile, but to the earth. Even though the matter was kept hidden from humans, Rumour twittered about it. Thereby incensed, Pygmalion, Dido's brother, killed him while he (= Sychaeus) was performing sacrifices. Virgil recorded the matter in the following verses [= *Aen.* 1.343-44a + 446b-50a]:

> Her husband was Sychaeus, richest in gold of the Phoenicians, [*and fondly loved by unhappy Dido; to him her father had given the maiden, yoking her to him in the first bridal auspices.*] But the kingdom of Tyre was in the hands of her brother Pygmalion, monstrous in crime beyond all others. Between these two came frenzy. The king, impiously before the altars and blinded by lust for gold, strikes down Sychaeus unawares by stealthy blow…

See Justin. 51.18 and Virgil, Book 1 and 4 of the *Aeneid*.]

DIDO Belī Phoenīcum seu Tyriōrum Rēgis fīlia, Pygmaliōnis soror, ac Sichaeī vxor, occīsō marītō, astu viā in Āfricam nāuigāuit, cum thēsaurīs quibus inhiāuerat Pygmalion. Carthāginem condidit annō mundī 3076. ante Chrīstum nātum 886. ab aedificātiōne templī Salomōnis 143. iuxtā Iōsēphum librō prīmō contrā Apiōnem. huius castitās, cui notam inūrere tentāuit Vergilius, eximiē laudātur ā Boccacio, atque etiam ab Ausoniō: siquidem ēmorī māluit quam cum Hiarbā Rēge secundīs nūptiīs coniungī. haec propriō nōmine Elīsa dicta est, Dīdō autem cognōmināta ā rērum magnitūdine, quasi virāgō. Culta est vt Dea, templīs, ārīsque eius nōminī dicātīs. Vidē lusti. li.18. Boc. li.2. dē cāsibus illūstr.

[Dido: The daughter of Belus, king of the Phoenicians or Tyrians, sister of Pygmalion and wife of Sychaeus, using her wits after the murder of her husband, sailed to Africa with the treasures Pygmalion desired. She founded Carthage in the year 3076 of the World (= after Creation), 886 years before the birth of Christ, 143 years after Salomon's construction of the temple [at Jerusalem], according to Josephus in his first book against Apion. Her chastity, into which Virgil tried to burn a mark of disgrace, was highly praised by Boccaccio and also Ausonius: in fact, she preferred to die rather than enter into a second marriage with King Iarbas. She was initially named Elissa; she acquired the name Dido from her heroic endeavours, as a man-like warrior woman. She is worshipped as a goddess, with temples and altars dedicated in her name. See Justin. 51.18, Boccaccio, *Dē Cāsibus Virōrum Illūstrium* ('On the Fates of Famous Men') 51.2.]

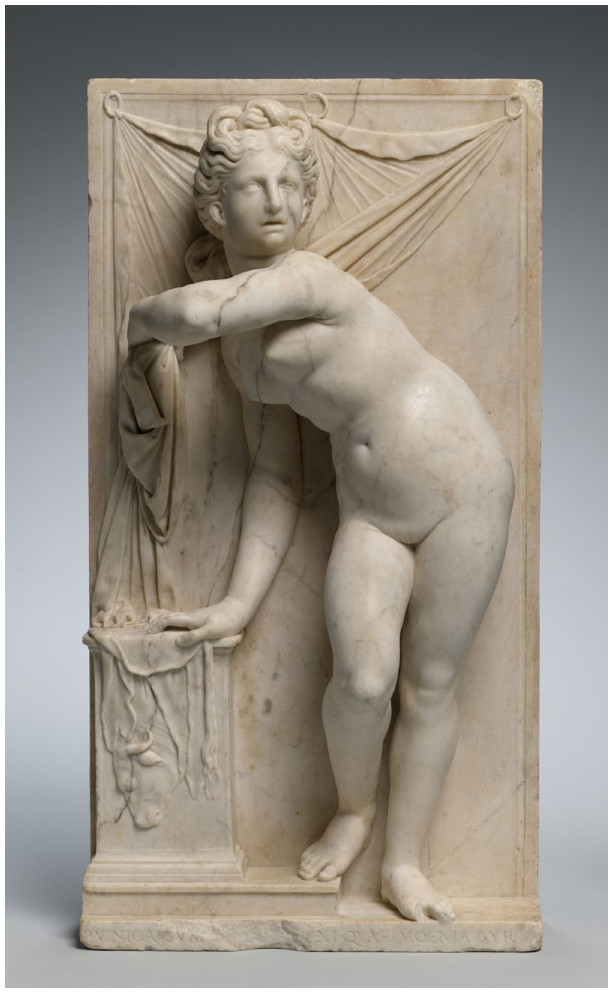


Fig. 8: Aurelio Lombardo, Dido (c. 1525). The Cleveland Museum of Art. Mr. and Mrs. William H. Marlatt Fund 2021.2. Public Domain, https://www.clevelandart.org/articles/defiant-dido

The Latin hexameter at the bottom reads:

PVNICA SVM [DIDO ERE]XI QVAE MOENIA BYRSA

(*Pūnica sum Dīdō ērēxī quae moenia Byrsa* 'I am Dido of Carthage, who raised the walls [of] Byrsa')

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Essay 3: Allusion[1]

1. Overview

Literary texts – indeed, languages in general – point beyond themselves. Any use of words is to some extent a *re*-use: 'Whenever we describe the world, consciously or unconsciously we measure our descriptions against previous descriptions of the world. The words which we use have always been used before; we never have a monopoly on their contexts and connotations.'[2] Not that we are simply compelled to recycle what others have said before: in creative literature especially, the ineluctability of relying on established linguistic and literary conventions 'is complicated by a high level of linguistic and literary self-awareness on the part of the individual language-user – in texts and traditions in which authors and readers, not content to be acted upon passively by tradition, seek to shape and define it to their own specifications.' Tradition may stifle as well as enable originality.[3]

Put differently, literary texts (not least those that belong to the same cultural tradition) converse with each other and do so in different ways. They draw on, and in turn contribute to, a stock of linguistic conventions, widely shared commonplaces (so-called *topoi*), and ideas. Moreover, authors may enter allusive dialogue with specific colleagues and predecessors, in a process that involves both imitation (*imitātiō*) and

1 This chapter is a revised version of material originally published in Ingo Gildenhard (2012), *Virgil, Aeneid 4.1–299: Latin Text, Study Questions, Commentary and Interpretive Essays*, Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0023

2 This quotation and the next come from the opening paragraph of Hinds 1998: xi (an excellent if demanding introduction to the topic of this essay).

3 The 'classic' general discussion of the phenomenon for the western literary tradition is T. S. Eliot's essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (first published in 1919, then reprinted in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*, 1920). For Latin literature, see Williams 1968.

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emulation (*aemulātiō*), and in turn become subject to the same dynamic at the hands of their successors. For the literary critic, it sometimes proves difficult to decide whether the simultaneous presence of a given formulation, image, or idea in two authors evinces allusive dialogue or rather betokens an independent tapping of a common repository of poetic idiom and imagery.

Such intertextual dynamics are constitutive of all literature. But the (universal) phenomenon of allusivity also manifests culturally specific variations. One hallmark of Latin literature is its pronounced bi-cultural outlook. A late start (mid-third-century BCE, half a millennium (!) after the Homeric poems were codified in writing) on the basis of Greek models ensured that from the beginning authors composing literary texts in Latin participated in the creative negotiation and transformation of at least *two* cultural traditions – the Greek and the Roman. In the not-too-distant past, many classicists tended to consider the reliance of Latin authors on Greek models a deficiency and looked down upon their texts as derivative and second-rate. But the very process of domesticating ('plundering'?) and transforming the literary heritage of another culture in Latin constitutes a creative phenomenon of signal importance: 'In creating a national literature in the vernacular on the model of another national literature, these denizens of the overlapping cultures of central and southern Italy were engaged in an undertaking which no one in the Mediterranean had ever contemplated before, but which became a paradigm for later literary history. The invention of Roman literature is one of the most extraordinary events in history....'[4]

Because of its inherently dialogic nature, some of the finest Roman poetry resembles a 'palimpsest', that is, a manuscript that has been written on more than once, with the earlier writing incompletely erased and often legible underneath the new text, or, to use another (and better) metaphor, a symphony. In addition to the poet's own voice, the voices of predecessors (Greek as well as Roman) frequently resonate in a Latin poem. Whether they are present subliminally or invoked explicitly (perhaps only to be silenced), such further voices have the potential to enrich the meaning of a text immeasurably. And in few texts the presence of allusive voices is as prominent as in the *Aeneid*. Virgil's epic subsumes

4 Feeney 1998: 53.

the entire tradition of Greek and Latin literature, including authors who have only survived in fragments or not at all. Conversely, as a text that acquired quasi-canonical status while still in the making and became an instant classic upon its posthumous publication, it exercised a profound influence on all contemporary and subsequent poets.[5]

Here is a brief orientation of the main literary predecessors whom Virgil worked into the fabric of his narrative:

Homer

Most obviously, the *Aeneid* is a Latin response to *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Virgil reworks Homer at multiple levels, from the large-scale to the minute, though always with a twist, not least in the way he imbricates the two Homeric epics in his own. He allusively signposts both in his opening phrase *Arma uirumque canō*. *Arma* ('arms') evokes the battlefields of the *Iliad*; *uirum* ('man', in the accusative) 'translates' the first word of the *Odyssey*, i.e. Ἄνδρα/ *Andra* ('man', also in the accusative) – though *Arma* also picks up *Andra* via assonance, whereas the entire phrase *arma uirumque canō* ('Arms and the man I sing') metrically mirrors the imperative phrase that opens the *Iliad*: Μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ/*Mēnin aeide thea* 'The wrath sing, goddess'.[6]

It is tempting to think of *Aeneid* 1–6 as 'Virgil's *Odyssey*' and of *Aeneid* 7–12 as 'Virgil's *Iliad*', developing, in chiastic sequence, the two opening words of the poem: *arma* = war = *Iliad*; *uirum* = the man and his travels = *Odyssey*. But as Georg Knauer among others has shown, matters are more complex.[7] Book 2, which features the fall of Troy and hence registers as one of the most 'Iliadic' books of the *Aeneid*, occurs in the 'Odyssean' half, and the *Odyssey* remains a pervasive allusive presence throughout the second 'Iliadic' half of the poem. In the excitement over Odysseus' travel adventures, which are narrated in Books 9–13, it is easy to forget that the *Odyssey* ends in mass-slaughter on Ithaca and the

5 For a pre-publication write-up see Propertius 2.34.65–6: *cēdite, Rōmānī scrīptōrēs, cēdite, Graiī! | nesciō quid maius nāscitur Īliade* 'Make way, Roman writers, make way, Greeks! Something greater than the *Iliad* is being born'. For Virgil's epic successors (and their struggle to step out from under the overpowering shadow of Virgil's achievement) see Hardie 1993.

6 The opening of the *Odyssey* differs metrically.

7 See Knauer 1964 and 1965.

outbreak of civil strife: in the last scene of the poem Athena borrows the thunderbolt of Zeus to break up a homicidal clash between the families of the murdered suitors and Odysseus and his family. Put differently, the *Odyssey* itself ends with a 'domestic *Iliad*', when the chicken of external warfare come home to roost in the form of civil strife – a constellation with all too familiar resonances for Virgil and his contemporary readers, living at the tail end of a century that saw Romans fighting Italian allies in the Social War (91–87 BCE) and Romans fighting Romans in prolonged civil wars (c. 133–31 BCE). The second half of the *Aeneid* self-consciously undoes the clean distinction of 'war in a foreign country' (*Iliad*) and 'homecoming' (*Odyssey*). Turnus considers the landing of the Trojans akin to an Iliadic invasion (with Aeneas and his men in the role of the Greeks). For Aeneas, in contrast, his arrival in Latium is an Odyssean homecoming (with Turnus and the Latins playing the role of Penelope's presumptuous suitors, trying to prevent him from claiming his birthright, land, bride, and all). The simultaneous presence of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the second half of the *Aeneid* thus underscores the ambiguous status of Aeneas, as both a foreign arrival in Italy and a proto-Roman returnee.

In addition to structural parallels Virgil makes much of typological affinities between Homeric figures and his own. Many characters in the *Aeneid* resemble, though never fully replicate, one or more characters in Homer. Aeneas both is and is not (like) Achilles and Odysseus but develops his own heroic profile in constant dialogue with his Homeric predecessors. Turnus both is and is not (like) Hector. And Dido evokes an entire host of Homeric characters, both female (Calypso, Circe, Nausicaa) and male: the encounter of Dido and Aeneas in the underworld of *Aeneid* 6 unfolds along the same lines as the encounter of Ajax (another suicide) and Odysseus at *Odyssey* 11.543–67: neither accepts the branch of peace extended by their remorseful tormentor.[8] As we shall see, many other figures from myth and history join those from Homer in Virgil's mirror cabinet to refract Dido one way or another.

Virgil's engagement with Homer further involves the repetition of so-called 'type-scenes' – scenes that recur with a certain frequency and often follow an established pattern. A case in point is Mercury's descent

8 See Figs 10 (Calypso), 11 (Nausikaa), 12 (Circe), 13 (Ajax).

from Mt. Olympus to carry out business of Jupiter's in the human sphere. We get such a descent at *Iliad* 24.339–48, *Odyssey* 5.43–54, *Aeneid* 1.297–304, and *Aeneid* 4.238–58, with the last one unfolding against the horizon of the previous three. At times Virgil all but 'translates' lines from Homer. Consider *Aeneid* 4.239b–241:

> … et prīmum pedibus tālāria nectit
> aurea, quae sublīmem ālīs sīue aequora suprā
> seu terram rapidō pariter cum flāmine portant

> […and he first binds on his feet the golden shoes which carry him up high on wings over seas or land, swift as the gale.]

These lines are closely modelled on *Odyssey* 5.44–6, but with marked departures and additions:

> αὐτίκ᾽ ἔπειθ᾽ ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα,
> ἀμβρόσια χρύσεια, τά μιν φέρον ἠμὲν ἐφ᾽ ὑγρὴν
> ἠδ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῇς ἀνέμοιο.

> At once he bound beneath his feet his beautiful sandals, immortal, golden, which bore him over the waters of the sea and over the boundless land swift as the blasts of the wind.

(*a*) 239–40a*pedibus tālāria nectit* | *aurea* ~ ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο ~~καλὰ~~ πέδιλα, | ~~ἀμβρόσια~~ χρύσεια:

- *pedibus* 'on his feet': ὑπὸ ποσσὶν
- *tālāria* 'the winged sandals': πέδιλα
- *nectit* 'he binds': ἐδήσατο (with a switch in tense)
- *aurea* 'golden' (modifying the sandals): χρύσεια

The translation is almost verbatim, with some minor tweaks: Virgil inverts the order of verb (*nectit*, ἐδήσατο) and accusative object (*tālāria*, πέδιλα) and economizes on the number of attributes for the sandals, only taking over one of three: he retains 'golden' (*aurea*, χρύσεια), placed in enjambment, but does without an equivalent for καλὰ ('beautiful') and ἀμβρόσια ('divinely excellent').

(*b*) [240b–41]*quae sublīmem ālīs sīue aequora sūprā | seu terram rapidō pariter cum flāmine portant* ~ τά μιν φέρον ἠμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρὴν | ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῇς ἀνέμοιο· ('... which were wont to bear him both over the sea and over the boundless earth together with the breeze of the wind'):

- *quae* 'which': τά.
- *sublīmem ālīs* 'him high on wings': μιν [= him]
- *sīue ... seu...* 'either ... or ...': ἠμὲν ... ἠδ'... ['both...and...']
- *aequora sūprā* 'over the sea': ἐφ' ὑγρὴν
- *terram* 'earth': ἐπ' ~~ἀπείρονα~~ γαῖαν
- *rapidō ... cum flāmine* 'with the swift breeze': ἅμα πνοιῇς ἀνέμοιο ['with the breeze of the wind']
- *pariter* 'even': no equivalent
- *portant* 'bear': φέρον (with a switch in tense)

Virgil again follows Homer in minute detail, to the point of imitating the variation in the correlating particles: *sīue* ~ *seu*: ἠμὲν ~ ἠδ'. But as with the sandals, he suppresses a Homeric epithet: his Mercury flies over the *earth* (*terram*) plain and simple, whereas Homer's earth (γαῖαν) is ἀπείρονα ('boundless'). Conversely, he adds two components: in place of the plain Homeric μιν ('him', i.e. Hermes), Virgil uses the predicative attribute *sublīmem* (acc.), which he further qualifies and explains via the ablative *ālīs* 'on his wings'. There is, then, an added emphasis on Mercury's sky-high altitude in Virgil: the god is soaring in awe-inspiring, 'sublime' fashion. On the 'sublimity of Mercury's flight' see Hardie 2009: 78–9: 'As often in the Augustan poets it is difficult to judge whether *sublīmis* has a purely spatial meaning, or whether it connotes "sublimity"... Mercury's rangings are the mythological equivalent of the sublime flight of the mind of Lucretius' Epicurus, who reaches from earth to heaven in the proem to Book 1 [sc. of *Dē Rērum Nātūrā*]...' Virgil's addition of the word to his Homeric model supports this 'strong' reading. Similarly, he endows *flāmine* with the attribute *rapidō* and changes the construction slightly by means of *pariter*: in Homer, Hermes flies 'with the breeze of the wind' (ἅμα πνοιῇς ἀνέμοιο), which could be taken to mean that the breeze carries him, and his winged-sandals only keep him in the

air without providing significant forward-motion. Virgil eliminates this ambiguity: in his epic, Mercury's flying equipment operates at a speed *even with/ equal to* (*pariter cum*) a powerful blast. Overall, then, we have the Olympic motto *citius*, *altius*, *fortius* 'faster, higher, stronger' applied to intertextual poetics: Roman-Virgilian Mercury surpasses his Greek-Homeric counterpart Hermes in speed, height, and flying ability: *imitātiō et aemulātiō*, the two principles by which authors situate their works vis-à-vis their predecessors, at their finest!

Then again, the presence of Homer in Virgil may manifest itself in the suggestive use of a specific word or phrase that adds unexpected colour and complexity. Consider the opening two words of Juno's speech at the outset of the epic (1.37*Mēne inceptō desistere...?* 'I resign my purpose...?' which, when elided, yield *mēnin*, a transliteration of the opening word of the *Iliad*, μῆνιν/*mēnin* = wrath, and resonate again in Aeneas' first speech, in an explicitly oblique reference to the *Iliad* (1.97–8*mēne Īliacīs occumbere campīs | nōn potuisse...* 'that I could not fall on the Ilian plains...'), affecting a transferral of anger from the world of Greek epic into the aetiology of Rome. (At the end of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas, initially full of despair, will feel the same degree of anger/ *mēnis* as Juno at the start...). Likewise, in the simile that compares Aeneas to Apollo, the phrase 4.149*tēla sonant umerīs* 'arrows rattle on [Apollo's] shoulder' arguably recalls Homer's description of Apollo at the outset of the *Iliad*, where the deity, who knows how to make an entry, takes wrathful strides down from the peaks of Olympus while 'the arrows rattled on the shoulders of the angry god, as he moved': *Iliad* 1.46–7). What happens if we read the *Aeneid* passage with the *Iliad* passage in mind? In Homer, the arrows of Apollo will bring the plague upon the Greeks. Does that turn Aeneas – whom the simile compares to the (Homeric?) Apollo – into a bringer of plague as well?[9]

None of these Homeric presences need to resonate for an appreciation of Virgil's poetry; but awareness of his intertextual poetics can enhance insight into Virgil's literary craftsmanship and enrich the thematic economy of his epic.

9 Scholarly opinion is divided: see the commentary *ad locum* for details and further discussion.

(Greek and Roman) Tragedy

Homer, then, is an important interlocutor throughout. But he is by no means the only Greek author whose presence is felt in the text. In *Aeneid* 4, Greek tragedy (and its Latin adaptation by Roman republican playwrights) resonates with particular force, both on the level of genre and in terms of allusions to specific plays. Aeneas may have fled the tragic world of Troy but his detour via Carthage ensures that he is picking up tragedy for Rome along the way, with Love (Elegy) functioning as catalyst.[10] Euripides' *Mēdēa* (translated into Latin by Ennius: see below) is a particularly influential intertext (Fig. 14). His iconic play became an important point of reference for creative responses to the Medea-myth in the Greek tradition, and (multiple) Medea joins figures from Homer among Dido's 'other selves'.

Apollonius Rhodius

Apollonius Rhodius is a particularly prominent voice in Medea mythopoiesis, and ever since antiquity his epic *Argonautica* has been fingered as an important point of reference for *Aeneid* 4. Servius, in his note on *Aeneid* 4.1, blithely claims that Virgil translated this entire book from the third book of Apollonius (*tōtus hic liber trānslātus est dē tertiō Apollōniī*), whereas his contemporary Macrobius argues that he based it on Apollonius' fourth (*Sāturnālia* 5.17.4, cited above 19–20). Such sweeping claims need to be taken not just with a grain but a hefty sprinkling of salt. It is true, though, that if one were to run Virgil and Apollonius through a plagiarism detection software, a range of passages would light up, both at the structural level and the level of detail.[11] Both poets feature as their basic plot a divinely engineered infatuation of heroine with hero that leads up to a 'wedding experience' in a cave with a tragic aftermath. But the differences are equally striking, starting with the full consent of both spouses to the marriage in Apollonius in contrast to the significant ambiguity around this issue in Virgil.

As with Homer, allusive affinity also registers at the level of detail. A case in point is the imagery Apollonius uses to explore the consequences

10 For tragic presences in *Aeneid* 4, see further Commentary, 'Introduction' 24–25.
11 All identified and discussed in Nelis 2001.

of Eros' assault on Medea, which stands behind Virgil's idiom at the beginning of the book: 'The arrow burned deep in the girl's heart, like flame', writes Apollonius, (3.286–7 βέλος δ' ἐνεδαίετο κούρῃ | νέρθεν ὑπὸ κραδίῃ φλογὶ εἴκελον) and compares the way Medea flares up in love to a woman who kindles a fire at night – 'such was the destructive love which coiled around her heart and burnt there in secret' (3.296–7 τοῖος ὑπὸ κραδίῃ εἰλυμένος αἴθετο λάθρῃ | οὖλος ἔρως). For readers familiar with Apollonius, Virgil's scenario of a heroine being wounded (4.1 *saucia*, 4.2 *uulnus*, 4.4 *īnfīxī*) by Cupid beneath the heart (4.4 *pectore*) and thus suffering from fires of love (4.2 *ignī*) which burn away in secret (4.2 *uēnīs*; *caecō*) has the unmistakable ring of a *déjà vu*, even though in the *Aeneid*, Cupid is not an archer.

Apollonius' Medea also stands behind the opening of Dido's address to her sister Anna, again with telling differences. At Argonautica 3.316–18, Apollonius describes Medea asleep, but worried for Jason: 'As for the girl, deep sleep was furnishing relief from her troubles as she lay in bed. But soon deceptive, baleful dreams began to disturb her, as they do when a girl is in distress.' And when she wakes up, Medea *soliloquizes* as follows (3.636–44):

> 'Poor me! How these dire dreams have frightened me (δειλὴ ἐγών, οἷόν με βαρεῖς ἐφόβησαν ὄνειροι)! I fear that this expedition of heroes will indeed bring some great harm – my mind is all aflutter about the stranger (περί μοι ξείνῳ φρένες ἠερέθονται). Let him woo an Achaean girl far away among his own people, and let my care be for virginity and the home of my parents. Yet nevertheless, I will take my heart shameless (θεμένη κύνεον κέαρ) and, no longer remaining aloof, will test my sister, to see if she will entreat me to aid in the contest because she is distressed for her sons – that would quench the terrible pain in my heart' (trans. Race).

The opening line of this self-address bears a striking resemblance to the opening line of Dido's speech to Anna:

> δειλὴ ἐγών, οἷόν με βαρεῖς ἐφόβησαν ὄνειροι.
> Poor me! How these dire dreams have frightened me!
>
> 4.9 *Anna soror, quae mē suspensam īnsomnia terrent!*
> Anna, my sister, what dreams frighten me with fears?

- δειλὴ ἐγών [= poor me] ~ *Anna soror*: Medea's address to herself, δειλὴ ἐγών [= poor me], has been replaced by Dido's address to her sister Anna (*Anna soror*).
- οἷόν [= how] ~ *quae*: Virgil has changed the adverb to an interrogative adjective (*quae* modifies *īnsomnia*: 'what dreams...'). Apollonius' Medea stresses the *degree* of her fear (how!); Virgil's Dido enquires into the *nature* of her frightening dreams.
- με [= me] ~ *mē*: in both Apollonius and Virgil, the direct obj. of the verb is the 1st pers. personal pronoun.
- βαρεῖς [= dire] ~ *suspensam*: Apollonius uses an adj. to modify the dreams; Virgil instead chooses to elaborate on Dido: *suspensam* 'on tenterhooks' modifies *mē*.
- ἐφόβησαν [= have frightened] ~ *terrent*: both authors use a verb with the basic meaning 'to frighten'. But Virgil shifts the tense from the past (ἐφόβησαν is aorist) to the present. Whereas Medea reflects on the nightmares from which she has just woken up, Dido (who has never fallen asleep) confesses to her sister that she has been and *at this very moment is* being plagued by 'nightmarish visions'.
- ὄνειροι [= dreams] ~ *īnsomnia*: in line with the present tense, Virgil uses a term that can refer to visions in dreams or hallucinations while awake.]

What to make of these reminiscences is up to each reader. In this instance, one could (for example) argue that the presence of Apollonius' youthful Medea at the beginning of *Aeneid* 4 helps to 'rejuvenate' queen Dido, who, just like her intertextual counterpart, starts to behave like a love-struck teenager – in contrast to the mature Medea of Euripides' eponymous tragedy, which dominates at the end.[12]

12 See further Chapter 7: Schiesaro.

Callimachus (via Catullus)

Apollonius' contemporary and rival Callimachus plays a more oblique, but equally important role in the allusive symphony of *Aeneid* 4. His presence is often 'mediated' by Catullus'. Thus, throughout the Dido episode Virgil repeatedly gestures to Catullus 66. This poem 'translates' into Latin Callimachus' so-called 'Lock of Berenice' (or, in Latin, *Coma Berenīcēs*), which is the climactic finale to Callimachus' most influential poetry book entitled *Aetia* ('Origins').[13] It offers a commentary on the marriage between King Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his sister Berenice (Callimachus' very own queen) from the point of view of a lock of the queen's hair: for shortly after their wedding, Ptolemy had to absent himself in warfare and the forlorn newly-wed decided to vow one of her locks should her husband return safe and sound. This lock, once dedicated, mysteriously disappeared, only to be later spotted by the astronomer Conon as a constellation in the sky. (Yes, those Alexandrian poets liked it contrived: their playful sophistication is an acquired taste.)

From the very beginning of his career as a poet, Virgil, who was much invested in the theology of deification, took a keen interest in Callimachus' 'Lock of Berenice' (and its rendition into Latin by Catullus) (Fig. 15). And allusions to Catullus 66, which is a poem about sex (lawful and illicit), marriage, faithful spousal devotion, and the abomination of adultery, but rehearses these themes within wider historical and cosmic settings, and with specific reference to an African queen, recur throughout the story of Dido and Aeneas. Here is the evidence:

13 Callimachus, *Aetia* fr. 110 (Loeb). Hyginus summarizes the story behind the poem at *Astronomy* 2.4: 'Above the constellation of Leo nearest to Virgo are seven other stars in a triangle located near Leo's tail, which the mathematician Conon of Samos and Callimachus say are the lock of Berenice. When Ptolemy married Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy and his sister Arsinoe, and set out a few days later to make war against Asia, Berenice vowed that if Ptolemy returned as victor she would cut her hair; and that she placed this lock of hair which was dedicated by the vow in the temple of Venus-Arsinoe-Zephyritis, but on the next day it was not found. When the king was angry at what happened, as we said earlier, Conon the mathematician, who wanted to be in the good graces of the king, said that the lock was seen located among the stars and he showed seven stars lacking a shape which he pretended to be the lock.'

(i) From the *Eclogues* to the *Georgics* to the *Aeneid* (and beyond):

Virgil's engagement with Berenice's hairdo predates the *Aeneid*; and already in his early works, the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, he associates the catasterism of the lock with the phenomenon of deification that was starting to come into its own at Rome in the wake of Julius Caesar's assassination. As Philip Hardie notes: 'In narrating the death and catasterism of Julius Caesar in *Metamorphoses* 15, Ovid alludes to the Callimachean Lock of Berenice... But the conversion of the Lock of Berenice into the *sidus Iulium* is not an Ovidian innovation. Jeff Wills points to the parallels between the opening of Catullus 66 and the sudden appearance to the stargazing Daphnis of the *Caesaris astrum* at *Eclogue* 9.46–8. At the beginning of the *Georgics* the poet foresees the possibility of a catasterism of Octavian himself, a *nouum sidus* that likewise alludes to the *Coma Berenices*. When in *Aeneid* i Jupiter reassures Venus that she will carry Aeneas "*sublimen ... ad sidera caeli*" (i.259–60), this will be a repetition of what she had previously done for the Lock of Berenice (Cat. 66.63–4.).'[14]

In the *Aeneid* Virgil uses the intimate relationship of Berenice and her lock of hair as configured by Callimachus and Catullus to help model both Dido's relationship with her sister Anna and the interaction of Dido and Aeneas (with Aeneas performing in the role of the lock).

(ii) *Aeneid* 4.8 *ūnanimam ... sorōrem* 'soul-mate sister':

Thus, at the opening of *Aeneid* 4, Dido visits her sister Anna, her 'other half'. The attribute *ūnanimus* characterizes the close relationship of the two sisters and arguably cues Catullus 66.79–86, where the lock of hair gives advice to recently married girls, including thoughts on adultery:[15]

nunc uōs, optātō quās iūnxit lūmine taeda,
  nōn prius ūnanimīs corpora coniugibus
trādite nūdantēs reiectā ueste papillās,
  quam iūcunda mihī mūnera libet onyx –
uester onyx, castō colitis quae iūra cubīlī.
  sed quae sē impūrō dedit adulteriō,
illīus – ā! – mala dōna leuis bibat irrita puluis:
  namque ego ab indignīs praemia nūlla petō.

14 Hardie 2006: 35, with reference to Wills 1998: 289–90.

15 I cite the text and translation (slightly adjusted) of Godwin, J. (1995), *Catullus, Poems 61–68, edited with introduction, translation and commentary*, Warminster.

> [You, whom the wedding-torch has joined with its longed-for light, do not now surrender your bodies to your concordant spouses casting aside your clothes and baring your nipples, before the onyx (= a type of vase used to store ointments, in this case for hair) pours pleasing gifts to me, the onyx belonging to you who observe the laws in chaste marriage. But as for the woman who has given herself to filthy adultery, let the powdery dusk drink up her evil gifts – ah! – and render them futile.]

Dido's and Anna's conversation at 9–53 revolves around the same issues, specifically whether Dido ought to stay faithful to her deceased husband or pursue a marriage with Aeneas. The fact that *ūnanimus* in Catullus 66 refers specifically to a couple of 'sibling spouses' would seem to make it an appropriate point of reference for a passage in which siblings (Anna and Dido) argue about spouses – especially in light of the fact that the notion of legitimate sex between a married couple is shortly afterwards followed by a curse on those who commit adultery. Dido likewise ends her speech with an oath that commits her to eternal fidelity to her dead husband Sychaeus.

(iii) *Aeneid* 4.66–7 *ēst mollīs flamma medullās | intereā et tacitum uīuit sub pectore uulnus* 'All the while the flame devours her tender heartstrings, and deep in her breast lives the silent wound':

If the previous instance could perhaps be dismissed as a lexical accident (though *ūnanimus* is a rare compound adjective), these lines forcefully recall Catullus 66.23–4 (the Lock speaking, commenting on the separation of her mistress from her beloved husband):

> quam penitus maestās exēdit cūra medullās!
> ut tibi tunc tōtō pectore sollicitae
> sēnsibus ēreptīs mēns excidit!...

> [How deep did emotion eat out the sad marrow of your bones! How then when you were troubled with all your heart you lost your senses and fell unconscious!]

Virgil's *ēst mollīs flamma medullās* reworks Catullus' *maestās exēdit cūra medullās* in allusive variation: the verb is the same, though Virgil uses the simple rather than the composite. *flamma* and *cura* are virtually

synonymous (especially in the light of *Aen*. 4.1–2 where Dido is said to be afflicted by the *cūra* and the *caecus ignis* in her veins) and occur in the same metrical position. And *mollīs... medullās* recalls *maestās ... medullās* (same case, same metrical position of *medullās* at the end of the line), with Virgil retaining the soft and plangent *m*-alliteration. (Virgil maintains Catullus' emphasis on sadness, which he loses with his choice of *mollīs* as attribute of *medullās*, by endowing Dido with her standard epithet *īnfēlīx* in line 68.)

(iv) *Aeneid* 4.321–33 (Dido speaking): *tē propter eundem | exstīnctus pudor et, quā sōlā sīdera adībam, | fāma prior* 'because of you my sense of shame has been lost and that prior stellar reputation by which alone I was winning a title to the stars':

Dido here holds Aeneas' accountable for destroying her only means of undergoing a notional catasterism (the metamorphosis of a human being into a heavenly body). The somewhat baffling formulation *quā sōlā sīdera adībam* resonates meaningfully if we set this desire in the context of other such ascents or apotheoses: that of Berenice's lock, that of Caesar, that of Aeneas, that of Augustus...

(v) *Aeneid* 4.357 (Aeneas speaking in his address to Dido in which he tries to justify his departure): *testor utrumque caput* ('I swear by both our lives'):

utrumque is perhaps best understood as *meum et tuum*, especially in the light of Catullus 66.39–40 (the Lock speaking):[16]

> inuīta, ō rēgīna, tuō dē uertice cessī,
> inuīta: adiūrō tēque tuumque caput.
>
> [O queen, against my will I left your head, against my will: I swear by you and by your head.]

As Lyne 1994: 190 comments: 'At a morally crucial juncture Aeneas has appealed to Dido's head; and the appeal is quietly but (as will emerge) importantly intertextual with Catullus.' And this is not the last time Aeneas will ventriloquize Berenice's lock.

(vi) *Aeneid* 4.492–93 (Dido speaking to Anna): *testor, cāra, deōs et tē, germāna, tuumque | dulce caput* 'I call the gods to witness and you, dear sister, and your dear life':

16 Skulsky 1985: 449.

As Aeneas, indeed echoing Aeneas, Dido operates with the diction of Catullus 66.40 *adiūrō tēque tuumque caput*. The shared use of Catullan idiom across Anna, Dido, and Aeneas subtly underscores the curious *ménage à trois* at Carthage, in which Anna (so Dido claims) enjoys privileged access to Aeneas and superior insight into his secret thoughts (4.421–3).

(vii) The pattern culminates in 4.693–705, the very end of the Book, where Dido, too, has a lock of hair severed:

> Then almighty Juno, taking pity on Dido's drawn-out agony and painful dying, sent Iris down from Olympus to release her struggling soul and the bonds of her limbs. For since she perished neither according to fate nor by a death she deserved, but wretchedly before her day and in the heat of a sudden frenzy, Proserpina had not yet taken from her head the golden lock (698*flāuum ... uertice crīnem*) and consigned her life (699*caput*) to the Stygian Underworld. So Iris on dewy saffron wings flies down ... and halted above her head (702*suprā caput astitit*). 'This offering, sacred to Dis, I take as bidden and release you from this body': so she speaks and severs the lock with her hand (704*dextrā crīnem secat*), and all the warmth dissipated all at once and her life vanished into the winds.

As Lyne 1994: 191 notes, comparing *Aeneid* 4.698 with Catullus 66.62 *dēuōtae flāuī uerticis exuuiae* ('the votive spoil of a blonde head'), 'both Berenice and Dido are not only blondes but "flauae"'.[17] He offers the following overall interpretation of the pattern, which sets up a family-resemblance between Dido and Berenice, the wife of Ptolemy, both royalty from Africa (191–2):

> 'The magnificent Queen of *Aen*. Book 1 is reduced to death agonies. Venus is causally involved in her death, as imagery, if nothing else, tells us. In these death agonies a lock of Dido's fair hair has to be cut from her head and devoted to the god of Death, Dis, and thus and then she can die. Now consider the fate of her intertextual counterpart, Berenice. A lock of her fair hair is also cut, but it is honoured by Venus, it is placed in the bosom of Venus (66.56, 'et Veneris casto collocat in gremio'), and it is made a star in heaven by, if the text is correctly emended, the direct agency of Venus. 66.59–62:

17 Cf. Skulsky 1985: 451.

> inde Venus uario ne solum in lumine caeli
> ex Ariadnaeis aurea temporibus
> fixa corona foret, sed nos quoque fulgeremus
> deuotae flaui uerticis exuuiae...
>
> Then Venus, lest alone in the varied light of heaven the golden crown from Ariadne's temples should find a place, but that we also might shine forth, the votive spoil of a blonde head...

> And the catasterized lock tells of all this fantastic felicity to the living and reigning Queen Berenice. The courtly dazzle of the intertext, Berenice's and her lock's magnificent triumph, the honouring of Berenice by Venus, underscores the tragedy of Dido's text, Dido destroyed by Venus, and the text of her death-dedicated lock; the intertext works here in a way comparable to a Homeric "contrast simile".'

(viii) There is a sequel in *Aeneid* 6, when Aeneas meets Dido in the Underworld. At this moment, Virgil makes his hero 'quote' Catullus 66.39–40 (the Lock speaking, cited above 58).[18] *Aeneid* 6.458–60 (Aeneas speaking):

> per sīdera iūrō,
> per superōs et sī qua fidēs tellūre sub īmā est,
> inuītus, rēgīna, tuō dē lītore cessī.
>
> [By the stars I swear, by the gods above and if there is any honesty under the earth below, against my will, queen, I left your shores.]

inuītus, *rēgīna*, *tuō dē lītore cessī* (Aeneas speaking) replicates almost verbatim Catullus 66:39–40 *inuīta*, *ō rēgīna*, *tuō dē uertice cessī* (the Lock speaking). The only differences are the switch in gender (the Lock is feminine, hence *inuīta*; Aeneas is male, hence *inuītus*) and the shift in location from *uertice* to *lītore*. But both nouns are ablatives of separation with *cessī*, are identical in terms of prosody, and occur in the same position in the verse. Moreover, whereas the Lock, now a 'new star' (66.64 *sīdus nouum*) swears by her former owner and place of residence (*adiūrō tēque tuumque caput*), Virgil makes Aeneas swear, first and foremost, 'by the stars' (*per sīdera iūrō*), that is, the kind of object that

18 Skulsky 1985: 449.

the Lock of Berenice turns into. Here is Susan Skulsky's take on this remarkable passage: 'We have been told that Aeneas' Roman mission will result in his ascent to the stars; Jupiter assures Venus: "*sublimen ... feres ad sidera caeli/ magnanimum Aenean*" (1.259f.). Dido had told Aeneas that because of her affair with him she could no longer look forward to the astral immortality of the virtuous: "*exstinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam, fama prior*" (4.322 f.). Now, attempting to reassure Dido as he swears by the stars (6.458) and uses the words of the constellation *Coma Berenices*, he instead unwittingly emphasizes the contrast between his success and her ruination.'[19] Moreover, Callimachus' queen is the distant ancestor of Cleopatra. The allusive dialogue thus also sustains a typological relationship between the mythic Dido and the historical Cleopatra, who figures prominently on the shield of Vulcan in Book 8 as another *femme fatale* out of Africa, who committed suicide. Here, then, the allusive multiverse opens out into history and turns intertextual typology into an oblique commentary on geopolitical realities.

On the Roman side, the *Aeneid* engages, subsumes, and marginalizes Roman republican poetry more generally, most of which is now lost to us.[20] But his three most important interlocutors are Ennius, Catullus (as we have just seen not least in his role as domesticator of Greek poetry written in Ptolemaic Alexandria), and Lucretius.

Ennius

Ennius used the idea of metempsychosis (= transmigration of the soul) to promote himself as 'Homer reborn': as part of his authorial self-fashioning, he maintained that the immortal soul of the greatest Greek poet had become newly embodied in himself, a multi-lingual and triple-hearted inhabitant from Southern Italy who had come to Rome towards the end of the third century BCE.[21] He was thus predestined to domesticate

19 Skulsky 1985: 449. Note in this context that at Catullus 66.26 the Lock hails her former owner as *magnanimam*.

20 For Virgil's epic predecessors see Goldberg 1995 on Livius Andronicus, Naevius, and, yes, Cicero, and the essays in Boyle 1993 for a survey of epic writing in Rome before and after Virgil.

21 Ennius claimed to have three hearts (*tria corda*) since he spoke three languages: Greek, Oscan (a now extinct language spoken in southern Italy), Latin: see Gowers 2007.

the Greek hexameter in Latin to compose the Roman equivalent of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, a universal epic entitled *Annālēs* (a 'year [Latin: *annus*] by year chronicle') that traced the history of Rome from its legendary foundation down to Ennius' own times. In many ways, the *Annālēs* gave written expression to the political culture of republican Rome.[22] And just as Virgil 'Romanised' Homer (working across the Greek/Roman divide), so he 'Augustanised' Ennius (working across the divide of *lībera rēs pūblica* and the emerging principate). His own self-fashioning as a 'poet-prophet' (*uātēs*), his emphasis on an ethnic (rather than a civic) notion of Roman identity, his decision to elevate *fātum* into a defining religious category, and his choice of a mythic plot with one central hero all constitute an oblique rejection of Ennius' way of doing epic.[23] In *Aeneid* 4, Ennius is primarily present in Virgil's intertextual interstices via his creative translation of Euripides' tragedy *Mēdēa*. But the vision of Roman history that informs Virgil's epic project and comes truly into its own in Carthage presupposes his republican predecessor throughout.

Catullus

In addition to mediating Callimachus (see above), Catullus, in Poem 64 but also elsewhere, offers an 'Omega Point' of bleakness concerning the link between Troy and Rome in the context of world history, in most exquisite Latin verse. For him, Troy (also in the form of renascent Rome) is and remains an excruciating site of personal and political disaster. Virgil makes the aesthetics of pathos and the tragic ideology of Catullus part of his own historical vision, as a crucial counterpoint to epic triumphalism. With specific reference to *Aeneid* 4, all of Catullus' 'long poems' (61–68) resonate: after sketching a coming-of-age trajectory for a member of Rome's ruling elite that leads from youthful sexperimentation to a marriage of sexual symmetry and reproductive success in Poem 61, the rest of the set explores how Catullus himself and others lose the plot, leading to gender trouble, shattered relationships, tragedy and

22 For Ennius' epic vision and the ways his literary enterprise interlocked with Roman socio-political realities see Gildenhard 2003, for Ennius' *Annālēs* as universal history Elliott 2013. See further Damon and Farrell 2020.

23 See Chapter 10: Gildenhard (for the full argument).

death; specifically, the abandoned Ariadne of Poem 64, left behind by a treacherous Theseus, is one of Dido's most salient intertextual doubles in the way she manages to channel her desire for lethal retribution into a devastatingly effective curse (Fig. 16).[24]

Lucretius

The third Latin author of special importance is Lucretius, whose *Dē Rērum Nātūrā* is a didactic epic about the world in six books from the perspective of Epicureanism, the philosophical doctrine of Epicurus (341–270 BCE). The Hellenistic philosopher endorsed distinctive (and interrelated) views on physics and aspects of the human condition (of special relevance for *Aeneid* 4 are his takes on political engagement, love, and religion). He posited a materialist universe comprised of a void and atoms (*sēmina*) that move in predetermined patterns apart from an occasional unpredictable swerve (a requisite element of contingency for the preservation of free will and agency). In the pursuit of happiness, which Epicurus defined as the absence of pain and/ or the experience of pleasure, humans are advised to withdraw from public affairs into a community (or 'garden') of likeminded fellow-philosophers, where they can ponder and live according to his dogma. This dogma held that romantic infatuation and political ambition are to be avoided at all costs since they will inexorably lead to painful emotional upheavals. In the service of mental tranquillity, Epicurus also developed a distinctive theology: his gods lead perfectly blissful lives in so-called 'in-between worlds' (*intermundia*) and are to be admired and worshipped for their supreme happiness but take absolutely no interest whatsoever in human affairs. Any communicative overtures that presuppose interactivity are hence just as pointless as anxious worrying about divine displeasure either in the here and now or in the beyond. Indeed, according to Epicurus there is no afterlife: at the time of death, the atoms that constitute the soul which animates the body simply disperse into the void. Many moments in *Aeneid* 4 (such as the descriptions of *Fāma* and Atlas or the theological musings of Iarbas and Dido: see commentary for details) evoke aspects of Epicurean physics, ethics, and theology, frequently reinforced by

24 See Chapter 11: Geisthardt and Gildenhard 412–17.

allusive gestures to Lucretius' *Dē Rērum Nātūrā*. But Virgil frequently does so in an adversarial spirit: spectres of Epicureanism register not least in order to be put to the test and found wanting.[25]

2 DIY Guide

The previous pages have highlighted a rich network of allusions to Greek and Roman predecessors that give Virgil's poetry a certain vibrancy of meaning for those conversant with his models and sources, even though engagement with his text does not require activation of this intertextual background. To go in search of allusions is not unlike a treasure hunt – one can end up empty-handed (grasping at straws) or discover richly rewarding intertexts. For those tempted to embark on allusive adventures traditional commentaries offer good starting points, by way of what we may call '*cf*.-gestures'. *Cf*. is short for *cōnfer!* (= the second person singular present imperative active of *cōnferō*, *cōnferre*, 'bring together', 'to compare'). These directives typically come with a list of references that may look like incomprehensible sound bites. But there is lots to discover if one tries to unpack the information provided. What follows is a Do-It-Yourself Guide to intertextual reading, taking as point of departure the comment by A. S. Pease, *Publi Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus* (Cambridge/ MA 1935), 85 on *saucia* at *Aeneid* 4.1–2 *At rēgīna grauī iamdūdum saucia cūrā | uulnus alit uēnīs*... 'But the queen, long since smitten with a grievous love-pang, feeds the wound with her lifeblood…'

> With this use of *saucia* cf. also Enn. *Med*. 254: *Medea animo aegro amore saevo saucia*; Catull. 64, 250: *multiplices animo volvebat saucia curas*; Lucr. 4, 1048: *mens unde est saucia amore*; Tib. 2, 5, 109: *iaceo cum saucius*; Ov. *H*. 5, 152: *e nostro saucius igne fuit*; 12, 57: *ut positum tetigi thalamo male saucia lectum*; Sil. 2, 422: *ipsa pyram super ingentem stans saucia Dido*.

Step 1: Process the dataset

To act on Pease's 'cf.', we need to decode the intel he provides. Here are the passages he invites us to consider:

25 See the incisive studies by Hardie 1986 and 2009.

(*a*) **Enn. *Med*. 254: *Mēdēa animō aegrō amōre saeuō saucia*** 'Medea, sick at heart, wounded by savage love'

- Enn. = Quintus Ennius (c. 239–169 BCE)
- *Med*. = His tragedy *Mēdēa*, which has only survived in fragments.
- 254 = the number of the fragment in the edition of Ennius by J. Vahlen: *Ennianae poesis reliquiae: iteratis curis recensuit Ioannes Vahlen*, Leipzig 1903. Since this is a fragment from one of Ennius' tragedies, it also appears in the frequently cited edition of the fragmentary Roman playwrights by Otto Ribbeck, *Scaenicae Romanorum poesis fragmenta: tertiis curis recognouit Otto Ribbeck*: vol. 1: *tragicorum fragmenta*, Leipzig 1897, in which it is number 213. But the standard edition of Ennius' tragic fragments is now H. D. Jocelyn, *The Tragedies of Ennius: The Fragments edited with an Introduction and Commentary*, Cambridge 1967, in which this line is numbered 216. And in the new Loeb edition *Fragmentary Republican Latin, Volume II: Ennius: Dramatic Fragments. Minor Works* by Sander M. Goldberg and Gesine Manuwald, Cambridge/ MA 2018, the number of the fragment in question is 89 (line 10).

(*b*) **Catull. 64, 250: *multiplicēs animō uoluēbat saucia cūrās*** 'she kept turning over in her heart her manifold worries, stricken'

- Catull. = Gaius Valerius Catullus (c. 84–c. 54 BCE)
- 64, 250 = A reference to his Poem 64, verse 250

(*c*) **Lucr. 4, 1048: *mēns unde est saucia amōre*** 'whence the mind is wounded with love'

- Lucr. = Titus Lucretius Carus (c. 99–c. 55/48 BCE)
- 4, 1048 = A reference to Book 4, verse 1048 of his one surviving work, the didactic epic in six books on the philosophy of Epicurus entitled *Dē Rērum Nātūrā* ('On the Nature of Things')

(*d*) **Tib. 2, 5, 109: *iaceō cum saucius*** ('when I lie wounded...')

- Tib. = Albius Tibullus (c. 55–19 BCE)
- 2, 5, 109 = The reference is to Book 2, Poem 5, verse 109 of his collection of love elegies

(*e*) **Ov. *H.* 5, 152: *ē nostrō saucius igne fuit*** 'he was wounded from our fire'; **12, 57: *ut positum tetigī thalamō male saucia lectum*** '...when I touched the prepared bed in my chamber, badly wounded...'

- Ov. = Publius Ovidius Naso (20 March 43 BCE–17/18 CE)
- *H.* = *Hērōidēs*, a collection of letters by abandoned heroines from myth (except Letter 15, which is by 'Sappho' to Phaon), written in elegiac couplets. Scholars have found it impossible to reach an agreement on the precise dating of individual poems; the first collection may have appeared around 15 BCE. The references are to Letter 5 (Oenone to Paris), though modern editors consider the couplet 151–52 spurious, and Letter 12 (Medea to Jason).[26]

(*f*) **Sil. 2, 422: *ipsa pyram super ingentem stāns saucia Dīdō*** 'wounded Dido herself standing on top of an enormous pyre...'

- Sil. = Silius Italicus (c. 28–103 CE)
- 2, 422 = The reference is to Book 2, verse 422 of his epic poem *Pūnica*. Silius' theme is the Second Punic War, with a special focus on the two generals Hannibal and Scipio Africanus the Elder.

Pease, then, instructs us to look (selectively, to be sure) at nothing less than the entire history of Latin literature from archaic times (Ennius, 2nd century BCE) to the imperial age (Silius, 1st/2nd century CE). His passages come from more than two centuries worth of Latin poetry. Some of his authors preceded Virgil (Ennius, Catullus, Lucretius); some were his contemporaries (Tibullus, Ovid); one came after (Silius Italicus). With reference to the second category, it is unclear whether the text by Tibullus was already in circulation by the time Virgil wrote the opening line of *Aeneid* 4, which complicates any argument about influence either way. The generic spectrum is equally impressive: Pease's passages come from tragedy, neoteric epyllion, didactic poetry, love elegy, fictional letters, and epic. At a minimum, the survey of authors and texts shows that Virgil shared his idiom of erotic passion with other poets across a wide chronological and generic range. But there is more to be discovered: determined intertextualists will sleuth further.

26 Ovid's *Hērōidēs* collection also includes a letter from Dido to Aeneas (7) – a brilliant take on *Aeneid* 4 from Dido's point of view!

Step 2: Check out the texts

(*a*) Ennius: the line from Ennius' tragedy *Mēdēa* comes from the famous proem in which Medea's nurse laments the voyage of the Argo and the mission of the Argonauts to bring the Golden Fleece to Greece. The adventure ended in disaster for her mistress (Ennius, fr. 208–16 Jocelyn):[27]

> utinam nē in nemore Pēliō secūribus
> caesa accidisset abiēgna ad terram trabēs,
> nēue inde nāuis inchoandī exōrdium
> cēpisset, quae nunc nōminātur nōmine
> Argō, quia Argīuī in eā dēlēctī uirī
> uectī petēbant pellem inaurātam arietis
> Colchīs, imperiō rēgis Peliae, per dolum.
> nam numquam era errāns mea domō efferret pedem
> *Mēdēa animō aegrō amōre saeuō saucia*
>
> [If only in Pelion's woods the firewood timbers, cut down by axes, had not fallen to the ground and from there the undertaking had not begun to begin the ship, which now is named Argo, because sailing in it chosen Argive men were seeking the golden fleece of the ram from the Colchians, at the command of King Pelias, through guile. For then never would my mistress, misguided, have set foot away from home – *Medea sick at heart, wounded by savage love*.]

This passage is a reworking, in Latin, of the opening of the prologue of Euripides' *Mēdēa*, on which Ennius' play is based.

(*b*) Catullus: *carmen* 64, his longest work, is a so-called 'epyllion' ('a little epic in the polished, Alexandrian manner') centred on the marriage of Peleus and Thetis. It includes an extended *ecphrasis* ('the description of an image or object in words') of the figure of Ariadne shortly after she has been abandoned by Theseus, from which our citation comes (64.249–50):

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27 This is the opening of the play. The high number of the fragment may hence surprise. It results from the fact that fragments are counted across plays, which Jocelyn arranges in alphabetical order from *Achillēs* (1–10) to *Thyestēs* (290–308) followed by the *incerta* (fragments that cannot be assigned to a specific play). The *Mēdēa* fragments are 208–45 (and may come from two different plays).

quae tum prospectāns cēdentem maesta carīnam
multiplicēs animō uoluēbat saucia cūrās

[*She* meanwhile, gazing sadly out at the departing ship, *kept turning over in her heart her manifold worries, stricken.*]

(*c*) Lucretius: his didactic epic *Dē Rērum Nātūrā* includes an Epicurean diatribe against the painful foolishness of love as opposed to the (fiercely pleasurable) physics of sex. Our line comes from a passage where Lucretius describes the physiology of sexual desire at the onset of puberty. After some comments on wet dreams (1030–36), he moves on to what amounts to the first surviving description of an erection and ejaculation in Latin (4.1037–48):[28]

sollicitātur id <in> nōbīs, quod dīximus ante,
sēmen, adulta aetās cum prīmum rōborat artūs.
namque aliās aliud rēs commouet atque lacessit;
ex homine hūmānum sēmen ciet ūna hominis uīs. 1040
quod simul atque suīs ēiectum sēdibus exit,
per membra atque artūs dēcēdit corpore tōtō
in loca conueniēns neruōrum certa cietque
continuō partīs genitālīs corporis ipsās.
irritāta tument loca sēmine fitque uoluntās 1045
ēicere id quō sē contendit dīra libīdō, 1046
idque petit corpus, *mēns unde est saucia amōre*. 1048

[That seed is stirred in us whereof I spoke before, when first the age of manhood strengthens our limbs. For one cause moves and rouses one thing, a different cause another; from a human being only a human's influence stirs human seed. And as soon as it issues, roused from its abode, it makes its way from out the whole body through the limbs and frame, coming together into fixed places, and straightway rouses at last the reproductive parts of the body; these places are stirred and swell with seed and there arises the desire to expel the seed towards the object to which fierce passion is moved and the body seeks that body, by which the mind is smitten with love.]

28 I cite the text and translation (slightly adjusted) of Bailey, C. (1947), *Titi Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex, edited with Prolegomena, Critical Apparatus, Translation, and Commentary*, 3 vols, Oxford.

In his commentary on the passage, R. D. Brown postulates that with the 'trenchant phrase' *saucia amōre* Lucretius recalls the line from Ennius' *Mēdēa* considered above but at the same time 'pointedly applies the image to love in general rather than to tragic or unrequited love, which is its usual application.'[29] In what is otherwise a passage characterized by an arch-clinical tone, the poetic metaphor produces an unexpected climax to the account of the physiological processes triggered by sexual desire. Lucretius' purpose is to cure the mind of love and his sly reuse of tragic diction is a pointed reminder that what is, from his point of view, romantic rubbish, can have dire consequences.

(*d*) Tibullus: Elegy 2.5, designed as a hymn to Apollo, celebrates the induction of the son of Tibullus' patron Messalla into the priesthood responsible for the preservation and exegesis of the Sibylline Books, the so-called *quīndecimuirī sacrīs faciundīs*. The poem includes quotations from a prophecy by the Sibyl, in which she foretells the story of Rome. The subject matter, then, could not be more Virgilian, and the *Aeneid* beckons in the background of this poem, even though chronological difficulties arise. As Maltby explains: 'The arrival of Aeneas in Italy and the early origins of Rome were of course also the subject of Virgil's epic poem, the *Aeneid*. This was not published in its final form until 16 BC, three years after Virgil's death. Tib. is known to have died shortly after Virgil and certainly before 16 BC ... Similarities between the two treatments nevertheless suggest that Tib. could have heard pre-publication recitations of parts of the work.'[30] In essence, the work is a version of the story of Aeneas from the point of view of elegy and written for someone who did not belong to the circle around Augustus and his 'patron of the arts' Maecenas. Dido does not make an appearance, even though Tibullus refers to 'resolute Aeneas' as 'flitting Love's brother' (39–40*Impiger Aenēā, uolitantis frāter Amōris, | Trōica quī profugīs sacra uehis ratibus*... 'Flitting Love's brother, resolute Aeneas, whose nomadic boat transported Trojan relics...').[31] And towards the end of the poem, Tibullus makes a pitch for general disarmament, in which our phrase occurs (2.5.105–10):[32]

29 Brown, R. D. (1987), *Lucretius on Love and Sex. A Commentary on De Rerum Natura IV, 1030–1287 with Prolegomena, Text, and Translation*, Leiden, 191.

30 Maltby in the Oxford World's Classics edition (see below), p. 120.

31 *Profugīs* perhaps presupposes knowledge of (a version) of the opening of the *Aeneid*. See 1.1–2 *Arma uirumque canō, Trōiae quī prīmus ab ōrīs | Ītaliam fātō profugus Lāuīnaque uēnit*.

32 I cite the text and translation of the Oxford World's Classics edition of Tibullus:

pāce tuā pereant arcūs pereantque sagittae,
  Phoebe, modo in terrīs erret inermis Amor.
ars bona: sed postquam sūmpsit sibi tēla Cupīdō,
  eu heu quam multīs ars dedit ista malum!
et mihi praecipuē, *iaceō cum saucius* annum
  et faueō morbō cum iuuat ipse dolor.

[With your consent may bows be banned and arrows banned,
  Phoebus, so Love may wander Earth unarmed.
Skill's fine, but after Cupid took up arms himself,
  alas that skill produced such punishment –
and mostly mine – while wounded I have lain a year
  and clung to sickness while my pain was joy.]

(*e*) Ovid: let's set aside the passage from Letter 5 as most likely an interpolation. For his letter from Medea to Jason, Ovid has picked a critical moment: Medea has already been ditched by Jason, so he could marry Creusa, the daughter of king Creon of Corinth, but has not yet committed infanticide. In our passage, Medea recalls how she felt about the Greek hero after the meeting in which Aeëtes has challenged Jason to embark upon a mission impossible to secure the golden fleece, much to the grief of his daughter (*Hērōidēs* 12.55–58):[33]

quam tibi tunc longē rēgnum dōtāle Creusae
  et socer et magnī nāta Creontis erat!
trīstis abīs; oculīs abeuntem prōsequor ūdīs,
  et dīxit tenuī murmure lingua: 'ualē!'
ut positum tetigī thalamō *male saucia* lectum,
  acta est per lacrimās nox mihi, quanta fuit...

[How far away then from your thought were Creusa's dowry-realm, and the daughter of great Creon, and Creon the father of your bride! With foreboding you depart; and as you go my moist eyes follow you, and in faint murmur comes from my tongue: 'Fare

Tibullus, Elegies, with parallel Latin text. A new translation by A. M. Juster with an Introduction and Notes by Robert Maltby, Oxford 2012.

33 I cite the text and translation (slightly modified) of the Loeb Classical Library edition: *Ovid I: Heroides and Amores*, translated by G. Showerman, 2nd edn revised by G. P. Goold, Cambridge, Mass., 1977.

well!' Laying myself on the ordered couch within my chamber,
grievously wounded, in tears I passed the whole night long.]

In intertextual terms, this passage both gestures to Medea's youthful past (as recounted by Apollonius Rhodius in *Argonautica* 3) and her murderous future (as dramatized by Euripides in his tragedy *Medea*) and of course also bears a striking resemblance to the Dido we encounter at the opening of *Aeneid* 4, also at the lexical level. If Virgil writes Medea into Dido, Ovid writes Dido back into Medea.

(*f*) Finally, Silius Italicus. The passage comes from the description of the 'Shield of Hannibal', which is modelled on Virgil's description of the Shield of Aeneas in *Aeneid* 8. It contains, among other things, a rewrite of *Aeneid* 4 from a Carthaginian point of view (Silius Italicus, *Pūnica* 2.406–25):[34]

condēbat prīmae Dīdō Karthāginis arcēs,
īnstābatque operī subductā classe iuuentūs.
mōlibus hī claudunt portūs, hīs tecta domōsque
partīris, iūstae Bitiā uenerande senectae.
ostentant caput effossā tellūre repertum
bellātōris equī atque ōmen clāmōre salūtant.
hās inter speciēs orbātum classe suīsque
Aenēān pulsum pelagō dextrāque precantem
cernere erat. fronte hunc auidē rēgīna serēna
īnfēlīx ac iam uultū spectābat amīcō.
hinc et spēluncam fūrtīuaque foedera amantum
Callaicae fēcēre manūs; it clāmor ad aurās
lātrātūsque canum, subitōque exterrita nimbō
occultant ālae uēnantum corpora siluīs.
nec procul Aeneadum uacuō iam lītore classis
aequora nēquicquam reuocante petēbat Elissā.
ipsa pyram super ingentem stāns saucia Dīdō
mandābat Tyriīs ultrīcia bella futūrīs;
ārdentemque rogum mediā spectābat ab undā
Dardanus et magnīs pandēbat carbasa fātīs.

34 I cite the text and translation of J. D. Duff's Loeb Edition: *Silius Italicus, Punica, with an English Translation*, Cambridge, Mass. 1934.

> [Dido was shown building the city of infant Carthage; her men had beached their ships and were busily engaged. Some were enclosing a harbour with piers; to others dwellings were assigned by Bitias, a righteous and venerable old man. Men pointed to the head of a warhorse which they had found in the soil when digging, and hailed the omen with a shout. Amid these scenes Aeneas was shown, robbed of his ships and men and cast up by the sea; with his right hand he made supplication. The hapless queen looked eagerly upon him with unclouded brow and with looks already friendly. Next, the art of Gallicia had fashioned the cave and the secret tryst of the lovers; high rose the shouting and the baying of hounds; and the mounted huntsmen, alarmed by a sudden rainfall, took shelter in the forest. Not far away, the fleet of the Aeneadae had left the shore and was making for the open sea, while Elissa was calling them back in vain. *Then Dido by herself was standing wounded on a huge pyre*, and charging a later generation of Tyrians to avenge her by war; and the Dardan, out at sea, was watching the blazing pile and spreading his sails for his high destiny.]

All the works from which Pease gleaned his parallels chime with the preoccupations of *Aeneid* 4. Several of the texts employ the image of being stricken by love with reference to an abandoned heroine (Medea, Ariadne), whose mythic CV boast striking parallels to that of Dido. The exceptions are Lucretius (but he at least *gestures* to Ennius' Medea by his use of tragic idiom) and Tibullus (who applies the image to his own, elegiac self in what emerges as an act of intertextual emasculation, given that the metaphor elsewhere applies to women). In a final step, we can now ask what each of them may contribute to our appreciation of Dido in *Aeneid* 4.

Step 3: Interpret the texts as in dialogue with one another

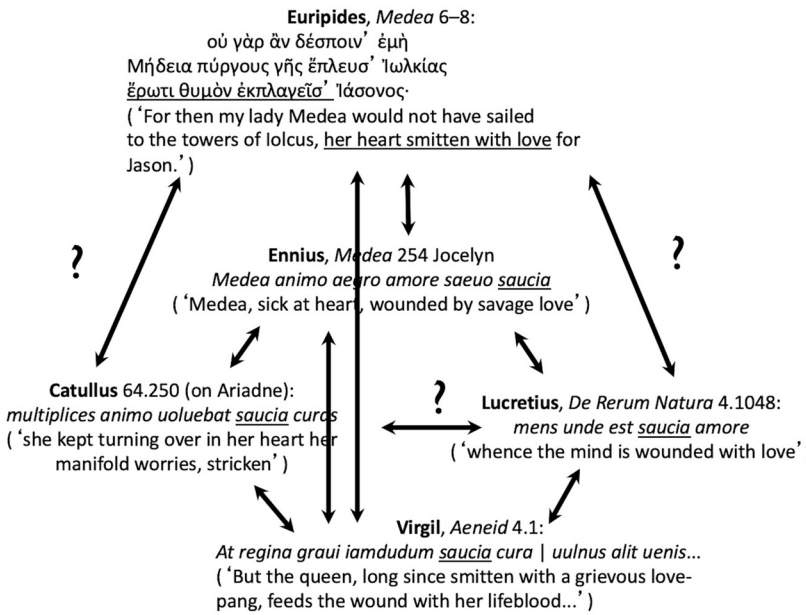
Euripides, *Medea* 6–8:
οὐ γὰρ ἂν δέσποιν᾽ ἐμὴ
Μήδεια πύργους γῆς ἔπλευσ᾽ Ἰωλκίας
ἔρωτι θυμὸν ἐκπλαγεῖσ᾽ Ἰάσονος·
(‘For then my lady Medea would not have sailed to the towers of Iolcus, her heart smitten with love for Jason.’)
Ennius, *Medea* 254 Jocelyn
Medea animo aegro amore saeuo saucia
(‘Medea, sick at heart, wounded by savage love’)
Catullus 64.250 (on Ariadne):
multiplices animo uoluebat saucia curas
(‘she kept turning over in her heart her manifold worries, stricken’)
Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 4.1048:
mens unde est saucia amore
(‘whence the mind is wounded with love’)
Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.1:
At regina graui iamdudum saucia cura | uulnus alit uenis…
(‘But the queen, long since smitten with a grievous love-pang, feeds the wound with her lifeblood…’)
?
?
?

Fig. 9: Virgil’s dialogue with predecessors in *Aeneid* 4.1

What do we gain by ‘activating’ Virgil’s predecessors Ennius, Catullus, and Lucretius in our reading of *Aeneid* 4.1–2 (Fig. 9)? We can frame this question in terms of authorial intent, on the assumption that Virgil invited his audience to read his text with the earlier passages in mind. But we do not have to. There is no need to posit authorial intent to ask whether the recall of comparable uses of *saucius* in earlier authors to signify ‘stricken with love’ enriches Virgil’s epic. From our perspective as readers, we can even extend the intertextual range to his contemporaries and successors. Virgil himself could not have alluded to *them*, of course, but *their* poetry may nevertheless help to illuminate *his*, not least because *they* may allude to *him* and thereby offer a comment on the *Aeneid*.

Virgil, as we have seen, models the opening of *Aeneid* 4 on Apollonius Rhodius' treatment of Medea in Book 3 of his epic *Argonautica*. An allusion to the opening of Ennius' tragedy *Mēdēa* would thus strengthen the presence of this mythic figure in the opening verses and reinforce the sense that Virgil's Dido and Medea are heroines that mirror each other. She is (as it were) present, via Apollonius, in her epic incarnation as a youthful maiden madly in love and, via Ennius, in her tragic incarnation as a bitter and abandoned wife, full of hatred and set on revenge. The double allusion thus elegantly and with supreme economy prefigures what will happen to Dido over the course of *Aeneid* 4. Just like Medea, she will turn from someone smitten in love under the compulsion of Eros/ Cupid into a disillusioned *femme fatale* out to exact retribution from the lover who dumped her. The implications are ominous. Suddenly, the prospect of murder is in the air. Medea, after all, first slaughtered her brother to aid the escape of the Argonauts from Colchis and then, once her relationship with Jason soured, their children. It is significant (and strengthens the case of an allusion to Ennius at the outset of the book) that Dido later moots precisely such atrocities as a missed opportunity (*Aeneid* 4.600–2):

> nōn potuī abreptum diuellere corpus et undīs
> spargere? nōn sociōs, nōn ipsum absūmere ferrō
> Ascanium patriīsque epulāndum pōnere mēnsīs?
>
> [Could I not have seized him, torn him limb from limb, and scattered the pieces on the waves? Could I not have put his comrades to the sword, and Ascanius himself, and served him up as a meal at his father's table?]

The *sparagmos* of Aeneas that Dido here envisages evokes Medea's murder and dismemberment of her brother Apsyrtus. On the Argonauts homeward journey she notoriously threw his skewered limbs into the sea bit by gory bit to slow down the pursuers. The most prominent model here is Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 4. The murder of Ascanius that Dido here imagines recalls the Medea of Euripides and Ennius, who killed her children by Jason in an

act of vengeance like another homicidal mother of Greek myth, Procne, who serves as mythic model for the final brutality: Procne slaughtered her son Itys and dished him up to his father Tereus, to avenge her husband's rape of her sister Philomela. An allusion to Medea's criminal record as archived in Apollonius, Euripides, and Ennius at the beginning of *Aeneid* 4 thus emerges as a programmatic invocation of a mythic role-model for Dido that later in the book finds more explicit recognition.

The references to the epic and tragic Medea in the opening lines of *Aeneid* 4 thus function as an intertextual risk alert, putting the reader on guard that the love plot may take a tragic, even murderous turn. The allusion to Catullus 64 works in similar fashion. Again, we are pointed to a heroine, Ariadne, whose story evinces suggestive points of contact with that of Dido. But if we recall Catullus 64.249–50 when reading *Aeneid* 4.1–2 we get an instant glimpse not of how it *could* end (as with Medea) but how it *will* end. Catullus here describes Ariadne gazing after the departing ships of her former lover Theseus, whom she once rescued from mortal danger. This of course is exactly the situation Dido will find herself in towards the end of *Aeneid* 4. And we may recall that Ariadne in Catullus 64 sends a potent curse after Theseus as punishment for his treachery (189–201), which, like the curse Dido calls down on Aeneas, turns out to be effective. Again, an allusion to Catullus 64 and the figure of Ariadne at the outset foreshadows the book's tragic end. But intertextual poetics goes beyond literary artistry: each 'Dido analogue' invites ethical reflection: to what extent is Dido's situation and her actions like, to what extent unlike those of her counterparts? Do Aeneas' 'crimes and misdemeanours' match those of Jason and Theseus? In terms of revenge ethics, which abused and abandoned woman escalates most, which figure comes closest to commensurate payback? And what do the various scenarios say about the male poets who construe them?

Via Ennius and Catullus, then, we can add the tragic figures of Medea and Ariadne to the tally of intertextual presences from Greek and Latin literature that shadow Dido (or, rather, provide the backdrop for her to shine and sparkle). They join Calypso, Nausicaa, and Circe (perhaps also the Lotus-Eaters and Sirens) from the

Odyssey, the youthful *epic* Medea of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, and the historical Queen Berenice (from Callimachus via Catullus) as well as her distant descendant Cleopatra (Fig. 17) or future queens of Carthage such as Sophonisba (Fig. 18) as points of comparison and contrast.[35]

And we may well put Dido in front of further intertextual mirrors. As Alessandro Schiesaro puts it:[36]

> More space for Euripides' Medea among Dido's intertextual ancestors is surely needed. But there are in fact more than two texts at stake: if Dido's (literary) family-tree is to be investigated thoroughly in search of connections with Medea, both ascendants and descendants must be included. As we have seen, it is important both to analyze the Medeas who offer Dido a model – Euripides', Apollonius', Ennius' – and those who recognize Dido as a model, Seneca's, but especially Ovid's (nor should Hosidius Geta and Dracontius be ignored). The heuristic value of this retroactive form of intertextuality will be no less noteworthy, for it may well show that such exceptional readers of Virgil were disposed to acknowledge the similarities between the two characters.

Seneca (c. 4 BCE–65 CE), Hosidius Geta (late 2nd /early 3rd century CE), and Dracontius (c. 455–c. 505) all composed plays or poems about Medea but did so with explicit or implicit reference to Virgil's Dido, offering a retrospective commentary on how Virgil scripted Medea into Dido – a tradition that begins in earnest with Ovid's *Hērōidēs*.[37]

The same applies to Tibullus 2.5 and, especially, Silius Italicus. On the level of diction, his line *ipsa pyram super ingentem stāns saucia Dīdō* 'Then Dido by herself was standing wounded on a huge pyre' refers to Virgil's metaphorical use of *saucius* in the opening line of *Aeneid* 4; but the scene depicted on Hannibal's Shield comes from the end of *Aeneid* 4, when Dido is also *literally* wounded. Silius thus neatly captures, in one line, the programmatic transformation of metaphor

35 See the Appendix with Figs 10–18 for visual illustrations of many of the figures who make an appearance in Virgil's intertextual mirror-cabinet.

36 Chapter 7: Schiesaro: 252–53.

37 Ovid's collection of fictional letters includes one from Dido to Aeneas (7) and one from Medea to Jason (12), both in dialogue with Virgil.

into reality, of mythic love into historical hatred, that Virgil outlined in his epic. Pointedly, he inscribes a re-run of the entire Dido episode on the shield of Hannibal, the nameless avenger whom Dido conjures in her horrifying curse before committing suicide. Silius' *Pūnica* thus emerges as the sequel to the *Aeneid*, along the lines of *The Empire Strikes Back*. And just as Hannibal challenges the descendants of Aeneas on the historical battlefield, Silius throws down the gauntlet to Virgil in the arena of epic poetry. (We all know, of course, which city ultimately ended up in ashes and which poet has retained a stranglehold on school syllabuses – but Hannibal gave the Romans a good innings...)

Lucretius, finally, works differently. If we want to activate the wider context in which he uses *saucius* in the *Dē Rērum Nātūrā*, one could argue that the opening line points to the encounter in the cave. Yet perhaps more importantly, he offers an 'alternative voice': Epicurean philosophy offers a 'scientific' explanation of love and sex, designed to help us combat irrational desires and emotions (as opposed to the natural enjoyment of sex and the impulse to procreate) – an antidote, in other words, to the experience which is at the very heart of Ennius' Medea, Catullus' Ariadne, and Virgil's Dido (among others). But it is an alternative voice, evoked, it seems, only to be silenced as irrelevant in the face of Cupid's onslaught.

These are some possible avenues of intertextual reading. Whatever we make of this symphony of allusions (if allusions they are), of further voices and interpretive possibilities, the foregoing should have illustrated that Virgil's *Aeneid* exists within a wider literary universe. His poetry invites rides on the intertextual roller-coaster, which, it is true, can have a dizzying effect and is certainly not the only way of reading. At times it becomes difficult to know when to stop, and after a few rounds of heady exhilaration that sick feeling in the stomach kicks in when one has gone a loop too far...

Appendix:
Dido in the Intertextual Mirror Cabinet: Some of Her 'Other Selves' Illustrated

Fig. 10: Giulio Bonasone. Calypso trying to detain Ulysses as a child prepares his armour at right and Mercury falls from the sky. Engraving (1531–1576). Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1959. Object Number: 59.595.13. Public Domain, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/392731

Fig. 11: Lovis Corinth (1858–1925), Odysseus und Nausikaa. The Rijksmuseum. Object Number: RP-P–1944–2771 Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200282107

Fig. 12: Henri van der Stok (1870–1946), Circe with two black panthers. The Rijksmuseum. Object Number: RP-P–1932–826. Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200296588

Fig. 13: Exekias, Suicide of Ajax, black-figure amphora, ca. 540–530 BCE, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Exekias_Suicide_d_Ajax_01.jpg

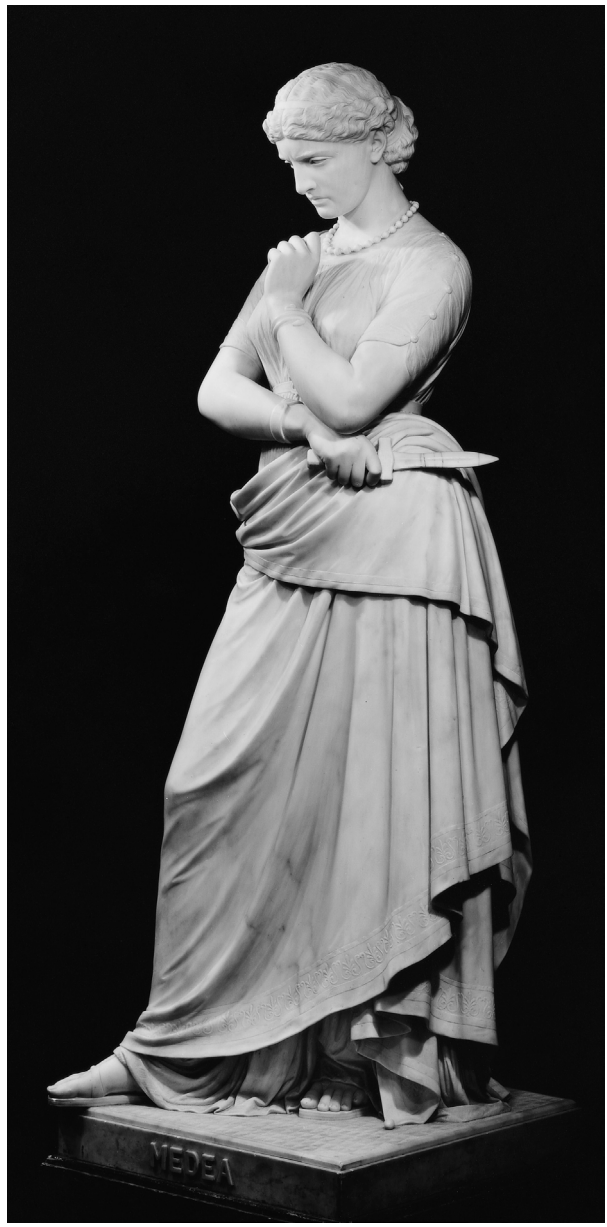

Fig. 14: Medea. William Wetmore Story, 1819–1895 (1865/1868). The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of Henry Chauncey, 1894. Object Number: 94.8a–d. Public Domain, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/12651

Fig. 15: The Lock of Berenice (*Coma Berenīcēs*): Sidney Hall, 'Bootes, Canes Venatici, Coma Berenices, and Quadrans Muralis', plate 10 in Urania's Mirror, a set of celestial cards accompanied by *A familiar treatise on astronomy* ... by Jehoshaphat Aspin. London, 1825, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2e/Sidney_Hall_-_Urania%27s_Mirror_-_Bootes%2C_Canes_Venatici%2C_Coma_Berenices%2C_and_Quadrans_Muralis.jpg

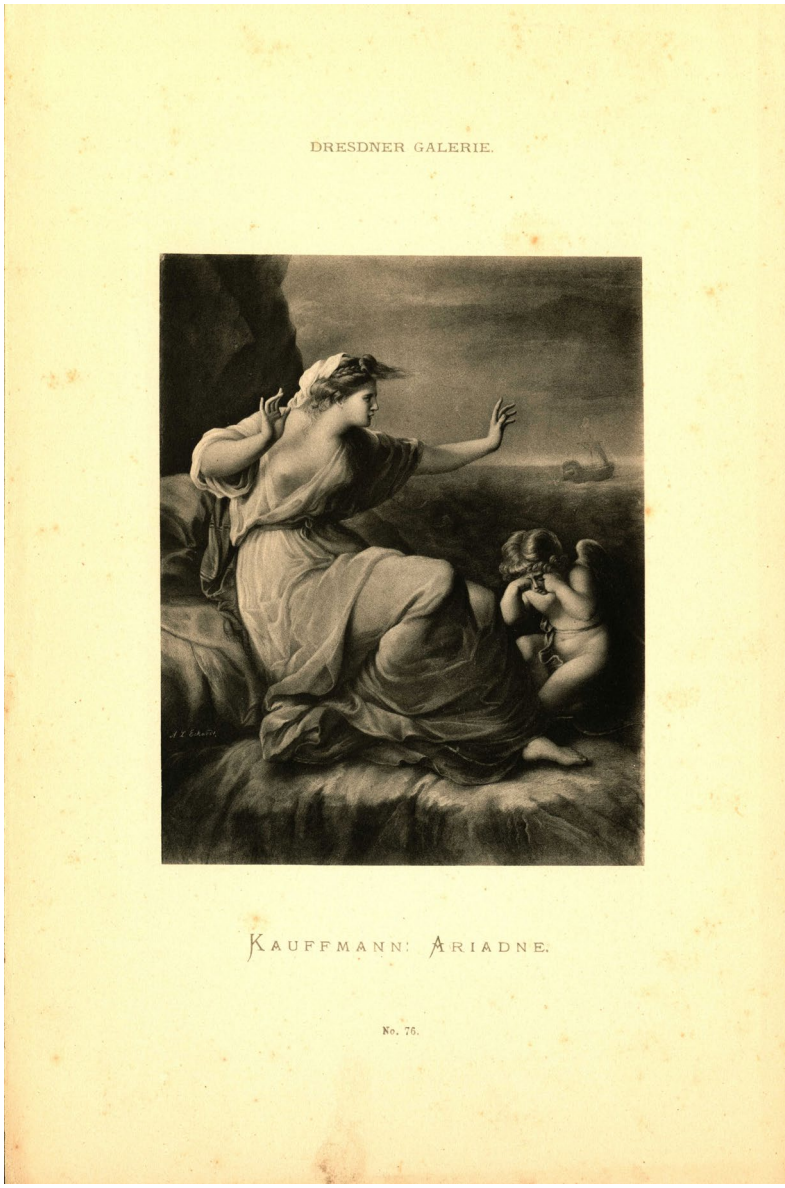

Fig. 16: Ariadne Abandoned (c. 1880). Wilhelm Hoffmann (1834–1900), after Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wilhelm_Hoffmann_Dresdener_Galerie_Cabinet_FS_No._076.jpg

Fig. 17: Cleopatra (killing herself with asp venom). Severo Calzetta da Ravenna, first quarter 16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1964. Object Number: 64.101.1433. Public Domain, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/203926

Masinissa Scipionis cōsilio, Sopho
nisben numidie regiā relinquens,
ne in manus Ro. incideret veren
s et misit quo hausto expiravit.

Fig. 18: Sophonisba drinking poison (1553), engraving. Print made by Heinrich Aldegrever. The British Museum. Object reference number: 1852,0612.64. © The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence.

(Text on tablet:) *Masinissa Scīpiōnis cōnsiliō Sophonisben Numidiae rēgīnam relinquēns nē in manūs Rō[mānōrum] incideret uenēnum eī mīsit quō haustō expīrāuit* 'Masinissa, forsaking Sophonisba, the queen of Numidia, on the advice of Scipio, sent her poison lest she fall into the hands of the Romans; having drunk it, she died.'

For ancient accounts see Livy 30.12–15 and Diodorus Siculus 27.7; for a survey of the extended history of reception (not least Petrarch's *Āfrica*) see Simonis, Annette (2015), 'Sophonisbe', *Brill's New Pauly Supplements II Online*, vol. 7, https://doi.org/10.1163/2468-3418_bnps7_SIM_004757

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Fig. 19: 'Priestess and Dido'. From the sketchbook of Johannes Antonius Canta and Johannes Tavenraat, 1826–c. 1888. Rijksmuseum. Object Number RP-T–1994–37–21(R). Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200618076

Essay 4: Religion[1]

1 Introduction

The *Aeneid* is chockfull of religious material, much of it unconventional. Virgil's theological creativity is on full display from the proem onwards. He starts the epic by announcing that (some) events in his literary world unfold according to the script of a divine pronouncement put on record (*fātum*) before turning to the Muse for an explanation of why Juno harasses a hero renowned for his *pietās*, here implying both dutiful devotion to kin and community and conscientious observance of religious responsibilities.[2] Matters to do with the supernatural then continue to register. Over the course of the epic we encounter not just the anthropomorphic divinities of Greek myth but also deified concepts (such as *Fāma*) and other supernatural forces; further reflections on the ethics (or lack thereof) of divine behaviour, in particular to what extent (if at all) gods are invested in ideas of transactional fairness or indeed (retributive) justice; various types of religious practices (rituals, sacrifices, modes of divination) or speech-acts (prayers, oaths, imprecations); priests, prophets, and other religious functionaries or figures (like witches); numinously charged spaces, buildings, artifacts, objects, materials, or substances (such as foal's bread); concepts to do with the organization of history and time (not just *fātum* but also *fortūna*);

1 This chapter is a revised version of material originally published in Ingo Gildenhard (2012), *Virgil, Aeneid 4.1–299: Latin Text, Study Questions, Commentary and Interpretive Essays*, Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0023

2 Aeneas is 'exiled by fate' ([1.2]*fātō profugus*); Juno vindictively pursues 'a man outstanding for his *pietās*' ([1.10] *īnsignem pietāte uirum*): Virgil wishes to know why ([1.8]*Mūsa, mihī causās memorā*). *Pietās*, both in its religious and non-religious senses, is such an important notion in Virgil's literary world that it deserves a separate discussion: See Essay 5: 'Transvaluating *Pietās*'.

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and glimpses of the beyond, in particular the otherworldly topography that Aeneas traverses in the central Book 6 during his descent into the Underworld. Yet nowhere else in the epic does religion play as prominent and complex a role as in *Aeneid* 4. The book comprises an extraordinary range of practices and ideas to do with the supernatural from different spheres of thought and experience, both Greek and Roman, some with a primarily literary or philosophical pedigree, others firmly grounded in ritual and cult, esoteric witchcraft, or the civic religion of the Roman commonwealth (which was undergoing an autocratic reconfiguration at the time Virgil composed his epic). This essay tries to take stock of the supernatural aspects of *Aeneid* 4 before exploring the 'logic' behind Virgil's composite theology.

2 Taking Stock

For mapping out the terrain the following grid may serve as a rough-and-ready guide:

A. The (semi-)divine personnel and the cosmos of the Graeco-Roman literary tradition (especially epic and tragedy):
- **A1**: Olympian gods appearing as agents in the narrative
- **A2**: References to Olympian divinities by the poet (e.g. via similes or intertextual gestures)[3] or one of his characters
- **A3**: Heroes (= the mortal offspring of divine–human intercourse)
- **A4**: Mythic cosmology (such as personified Dawn, the Sun, or the Underworld and its 'laws')

B. Other numinous beings, some with explicit, some with implied agency:
- **B1**: Nature Divinities (*Aethēr*, *Tellūs*), nymphs
- **B2**: Pre-Olympian divinities (Titans, Giants)

3 In *Aeneid* 4, some gods feature as agents in the narrative (notably Iris, Juno, Jupiter, Mercury, and Venus), some appear in other capacities. Apollo (at 4.143–49) and Bacchus (at 4.301–3) appear in similes. Anna and Dido sacrifice to Juno, Ceres, Apollo, and Dionysus (4.58–9). Dionysus/ Bacchus also receives allusive acknowledgement elsewhere and has a pervasive subliminal presence in the text. The Apollo-simile at 4.143–49, for instance, contains many an incongruous touch that recalls Bacchus (see commentary *ad loc.*), and at 4.469 Virgil compares Dido's deranged state of mind to that of 'raving Pentheus' under the spell of Dionysus.

B3: Deified concepts (*Fāma*)
B4: The Furies/ *Dīrae*
B5: Triple-bodied Hecate, goddess of witchcraft
B6: Household gods (*Penātēs*)
B7: Shades of the deceased (*Mānēs*)
B8: Ghosts (individuals who in some form re-enter the world of the living from the beyond)

C. Potential modes of human – divine interaction:
C1: rituals
C2: sacrifices
C3: prayers/ vows
C4: oaths/ (self-)imprecations
C5: 'magic' rites/ witchcraft
C6: Character disposition [*pietās*]
C7: Righteous actions (such as generous hospitality) that might attract divine recognition and reward)

D. Potential modes of divine – human interaction:
D1: (Non/partial) responsiveness to human overtures
D2: Self-motivated interventions behind the scenes
D3: Epiphanies (to select individuals)
D4: Dream appearances
D5: Empirical signs[4]
- sought (*ōmina impetrātīua*)
- unsolicited (*ōmina oblātīua*)

D6: Privileged humans ('seers') or other prophet-figures
D7: Divine knowledge passed on via oracles

E. Personnel, 'Infrastructure', Topography
E1: Religious functionaries and specialists (priests and priestesses, entrail-inspectors, seers, witches)
E2: Objects and materials used in religious contexts (including 'magic')
E3: Altars
E4: Shrines and temples
E5: Geographical locations

F. Scenarios or concepts (such as *fās* 'divine law') reminiscent of the (civic) religion of republican/ early imperial Rome

4 Cicero, *Dē Dīuīnātiōne* 1.12, 34, 72.

G. Conceptions of the divine (irrespective as to whether substantiated by Virgil's literary world)
- **G1**: Concerning divine agency
  - (*a*) self-interested with personal agendas
  - (*b*) guardians of the scrolls of fate (and their contents)
  - (*c*) responsive to ritual worship and material transactions
  - (*d*) responsive to righteous character/ conduct
  - (*e*) non-interactive divinities (as in Epicurean physics)
- **G2**: Philosophies of history
  - *fātum* (affinities with Stoic providence)
  - *fortūna*

With this grid in mind, we can pick out the following verses in *Aeneid* 4 as involving or implying a supernatural sphere:

6–7:	The appearance of Aurora signals daybreak. [**A4**]
12:	Dido believes in Aeneas' divine lineage. [**A3**]
14:	Dido sympathizes with the travails imposed upon Aeneas by the *fāta* [**G2**]
21:	Reference to the household gods (*Penātēs*) that resided in the home Dido shared with Sychaeus. [**B6**]
24–29:	Dido calls down divine punishment upon her should she violate her oath of loyalty to Sychaeus (this includes being swallowed up by the earth and being struck by Jupiter with lightning). [**C4**]
34:	Anna dismisses the notion that Sychaeus' shades (*Mānēs*) take any interest in what Dido is doing. [**B7**, **G2**]
45–46:	Anna proclaims that Aeneas arrived at Carthage owing to divine favour and Juno's aid (*dīs ... auspicibus*, *Iūnōne secundā*). [**A1**]
56–59:	Anna and Dido perform prayers and sacrifices to solicit the favour of Apollo, Ceres, Iuno and Liber. [**C2**/**3**, **A2**]
60–64:	Dido performs further rites and engages in extispicy to divine the future [**F**]
65–66:	Virgil, in an authorial exclamation, refers to prophets (*uātēs*) and follows this up with rhetorical questions about the futility of *uōta* and *dēlūbra*. [**D6**, **C3**, **E4**]
90–128:	Interlude in Heaven: Juno accosts Venus to arrange a marriage between Aeneas and Dido; reference to [113]*fās*. [**A1**, **F**]
129:	Aurora appears. [**A4**]
143–149:	Simile comparing Aeneas to Apollo with oblique allusions to Dionysus. [**A2**]

166–168: The encounter in the cave, witnessed by Tellus, Juno Pronuba, Aether, and Nymphs. [**A1**, **B1**]

173–197: *Fāma*, her nature, genealogy (offspring of Terra, sister of the giants Coeus Enceladus), and intervention in the case at hand. [**B3**, **B2**]

198: Iarbas' parents (Jupiter and a Garamantian nymph) [**A2**, **A3**, **B1**]

198–218: Description of Iarbas' hundred altars dedicated to his father Ammon (a.k.a. Jupiter) and prayer to Jupiter, which ends in a quasi-Epicurean questioning of divine agency. [**C2**, **C3**, **G1**]

219–237: Jupiter's reaction to Iarbas' prayer and his order to Mercury. [**A1**]

238–258: Mercury gets himself ready and flies to Carthage, via the man-mountain Atlas. [**A1**]

259–278: Theophany of Mercury before Aeneas and delivery of the message from Jupiter. [**A1**, **D3**]

282: Aeneas is deeply affected by the *imperium deōrum.* [**A1**]

298–299: *Fāma* brings Dido the news of the Trojans' preparation to leave. [**B3**]

301–304: A simile compares Dido's raging through Carthage to a Maenad on Mt. Cithaeron under the influence of Bacchus. [**A2**]

331: Under the impact of Jupiter's commands (*Iouis monitīs*), Aeneas remains committed to his plan to depart despite Dido's desperate appeal. [**A1**]

340: Aeneas refers to the *fāta* as the force that guides his actions. [**G2**]

345: Aeneas recalls Grynean Apollo and the Lycian oracles (of Apollo) bidding him to seek Italy. [**A2**, **D7**]

350: Aeneas appeals to *fās* (divine law). [**F**]

351–53: Aeneas claims to be haunted at night by the troubled ghost of his father Anchises. [**B8**]

355: Aeneas refers to Italy as *fātālia arua*. [**G2**]

356–59: Aeneas recounts the theophany of Mercury and the orders of Jupiter. [**D3**]

365: Dido denies Aeneas' divine lineage (*nec tibi dīua parēns*). [**A3**]

371–72: Dido denies that *maxima Iūno* or Jupiter could possibly approve of Aeneas' demeanour. [**A2**]

376–80: Dido scornfully quotes Aeneas' religious justification for leaving Carthage back at him: with reference to *augur Apollō*, *Lyciae sortēs*, and Jupiter's messenger Mercury, she mockingly dismisses the idea that gods get involved in human affairs, in proto-Epicurean fashion. [**G1**(*e*)]

382: Dido articulates the wish that Aeneas will suffer shipwreck 'if (the) righteous gods have any power' (*sī quid pia nūmina possunt*). [**G1**]

385–87: Dido threatens Aeneas that after her death, her shade will haunt him wherever he goes to avenge the injustice; she will take delight in hearing of Aeneas' punishment when the report reaches the Underworld. [**C4**]

393: Aeneas is given his epithet *pius*. [**G1**(***d***)]

396: Despite his wish to linger with Dido, Aeneas is mindful of the *iussa dīuum* and returns to his fleet. [**A1**]

412: The narrator addresses Amor in an authorial comment on Dido's disturbed frame of mind when she watches the preparations of the Trojans to leave (*improbe Amor, quid nōn mortālia pectora cōgis!*). [**A2**]

427: Dido, speaking to Anna, denies that she ever unsettled the Shades of Anchises or committed any other hostile act towards Aeneas, in the context of wondering why he proves so intractable. [**B7**]

440: Aeneas remains unmoved by the pleading of Anna on behalf of her sister because of the fates and a god: *fāta obstant placidāsque uirī deus obstruit aurīs*. [**A2**, **G2**]

446: Simile of the oak tree, the roots of which reach down into Tartarus [**A4**]

447: Virgil refers to Aeneas as *hērōs*. [**A3**]

450: Dido begins to pray for death *fātīs exterrita*. [**G2**]

452–54: During sacrifice some dreadful omens occur: as Dido puts her offerings on the altar, the holy water darkens and the poured wine changes into loathsome gore. [**E2**, **D5**]

460–68: Dido has dreadful visions: at night, she hears her husband calling; an ill-boding screech-owl settles on the housetops, hooting death and destruction; many prophesies of *uātēs* terrify her; while asleep, Aeneas appears in her nightmares. [**D5**/**6**]

469–73: Simile that compares Dido to Pentheus in the thralls of Bacchus-induced insanity and Orestes, after the matricide, who is hounded by the Furies and the ghost of his mother, while avenging fiends (*Dīrae*) crouch on the threshold. [**A2**, **B4**]

483–98: Dido tells Anna of an encounter with the priestess (*sacerdōs*) who once guarded the garden of the Hesperides; she is said to be skilled in magic, above all in how to rid oneself of, or induce, erotic attraction, but also in meddling with nature and ghostly or unnatural phenomena more generally; as if following the priestess' instructions she asks Anna to construct a pyre for the purpose of sympathetic magic. [**E1**]

499–521: Once the pyre is in place, surrounded by altars, Dido, whom Virgil now also designates as 'priestess' (*sacerdōs*), calls three hundred gods in a thundering voice, specifically Erebus, Chaos, threefold Hecate, and triple-faced Diana; she also wields the paraphernalia of magic rites: water, venomous herbs collected by moonlight with brazen sickles, and a love charm from the brow of a newly born colt. The passage ends with her again calling on the gods and the stars as witnesses of her doom and praying 'to whatever power, righteous and mindful, watches over lovers unjustly allied' (520–1*tum, sī quod nōn aequō foedere amantēs | cūrae nūmen habet iūstumque memorque, precātur*). [**A2**, **B2**, **B5**, **E1**/**2**, **G**]

554–70: While Aeneas slumbers on his ship (which is ready to depart), he has a vision of a god who resembles Mercury in every respect; the divinity calls him mad for putting off his departure while the winds are favourable and warns him of Dido. [**D3**]

574–79: Aeneas exhorts his men with reference to his vision of 'a god sent from high heaven' (*deus aethere missus ab altō*), adding *sequimur tē, sancte deōrum, | quisquis es* 'We follow you, holy among gods, whoever you are', and asking him for succour during the voyage. [**D3**]

584–85: Dawn (Aurora) rises again, leaving the bed of Tithonus. [**A4**]

590: Dido becomes aware of the fact that Aeneas has left and exclaims '*prō Iuppiter!*' [**A2**]

596: Dido asks herself whether her and/ or Aeneas' impious deeds (*facta impia*) are catching up with her. [**G1**(***d***)]

598: A scornful reference to the trustworthiness of Aeneas and his alleged transport of the household gods (*patriōs … penātēs*). [**B6**]

605–29: Dido utters a horrific curse that begins with the invocation of various divinities: Sol, Juno, Hecate, the Avenging Furies (*Dīrae ultrīcēs*), and the gods of Elissa dying (*dī morientis Elissae*). She asks them to turn their divine power and attention (*nūmen*) to the evils she has suffered and to visit as much ill-luck upon the accursed head of Aeneas (*īnfandum caput*) as the ordinances of Jupiter (*fāta Iouis*) allow. Dido then invokes eternal hatred between the people of Carthage and of Aeneas (i.e. the Romans) and prays for an avenger to rise from her ashes (an anticipation of Hannibal). (From the point of view of effective communication with supernatural powers, it is important to note that both parts of her curse – that concerning the destiny of Aeneas in the rest of Virgil's poem as well as that concerning Roman history – are fulfilled.) [**B4**, **C4**]

634–40: Dido proceeds with her scheme of suicide; in her address to Barce, the former nurse of Sychaeus, she asks her to tell Anna to purify herself ritually with river water and to bring sacrificial victims and offerings ordained for atonement. Barce, too, is asked to bind her temples with a pure chaplet (*pia uitta*) since Dido is now minded to carry out the rites of Stygian Jupiter. [**A4**]

651–53: At the opening of her suicide speech Dido recalls happier times 'while the fates and god allowed' (*dum fāta deusque sinēbat*). She then calls her life over – having finished the course granted by Fortune, the goddess of happenstance (*quem dederat cursum fortūna perēgī*) – and anticipates her majestic shade to travel beneath the earth (*nunc magna meī sub terrās ībit imāgō*). [**A4**, **G2**]

662: At the conclusion of her suicide speech, Dido refers to the light emitted by her funeral pyre, which Aeneas will behold from the sea, as omens (*ōmina*) of her death. [**D5**]

666: After Dido has stabbed herself, *Fāma* rages through the stricken city (*concussam bacchātur Fāma per urbem*). [**B3**]

671: The raving of *Fāma* is compared to an army that is sacking a city and setting it afire so that the flames engulf the houses of men and the temples of the gods (*culmina ... deōrum*). [**B3**, **E4**]

678: Anna exclaims that Dido should have shared her suicide plans with her, so she could have joined her sister in death (*eadem mē ad fāta uocāssēs*). [{**G2**}; the primary sense of *fāta* here is death]

680–81: Anna recalls how she herself has built the pyre and called upon the paternal divinities (*patriōsque uocāuī | uōce deōs*). [**B6**]

693–705: Despite being mortally wounded, Dido is unable to die owing to a religious law: since she is perishing neither by fate nor by a death she had earned (*nec fātō meritā nec morte perībat*), but rather prematurely in a sudden fit of *furor*, Proserpina, the queen of the Underworld, refuses to take a lock of her hair, as a ritual prerequisite of consigning her head to the Stygian Orcus. Accordingly, Dido's struggling soul is unable to free itself from her body. Eventually, Juno takes pity on her protégé and sends down Iris, who cuts the lock and consecrates it to Dis, the god of the Underworld. This sets Dido's soul free from her body, and her life vanishes into the winds. [**A1**, **A4**]

3 Religious Paradigms

In the *Aeneid*, Virgil brings together disparate and at times conflicting ways of thinking about the divine: (*a*) 'transactional interactivity' of humans with numinous forces in the universe; (*b*) wilful anthropomorphic divinities who pursue their own agendas often in rivalry with one another; and (*c*) the notion of predestination. Each 'theology' operates according to its own logic:

(*a*) 'transactional interactivity': much of religious thought and practice involves modes of human-divine interactions that are transactional. Humans engage in communicative overtures to establish a relation of reciprocity. Dispositions or activities thought to attract favourable attention of divine powers are undertaken in the hope or expectation that the power so addressed will listen and either lend support to those seeking them out or at least abstain from negative interference. The support can take various forms, such as ensuring the successful completion of an objective (victory in battle, restoration of health, fulfilment of a curse) or, less interventionist but still useful, sharing information about the future: certain modes of divination posit that the gods communicate about things to come with the help of empirical signs (feeding patterns of chicken, the flight of birds, the constitution of the liver of a sacrificial victim, unnatural occurrences such as a two-headed calf or bloody rain) that those with the necessary expertise are able to decode and meaningfully act upon.[5]

Transactional interactivity rests on two basic assumptions: (*i*) the existence of potentially responsive forces; (*ii*) an at least partially contingent ('open') future. If either (*i*) or (*ii*) do not apply, efforts to enter exchange relations with divine powers in the hope of shaping what is to come would be pointless. The 'ontology' of the divinity (or divinities) in question is of secondary importance: the logic is the same whether one turns to (say) Olympian Jove, chthonic Hecate, a collective of anonymous 'forces' (*nūmina*), or any other imaginary supernatural agent. These assumptions inform Rome's civic religion: in return for dutiful observance (*religiō*) and abidance by divine law (*fās*) the gods

5 Some modes of divination (such as astrology) imagine the future as knowable (since predetermined) but unalterable.

were thought to lend their support to the civic community as it marched forward in time. A significant amount of effort went into keeping the gods benevolently predisposed towards the *rēs pūblica* – a condition sometimes called *pāx deōrum*, i.e. 'peace with the gods', which meant that the gods would not cause wilful havoc and disaster. If relations broke down (through an involuntary slip in a ritual procedure, for instance), the Roman divinities were thought to be in the habit of sending warning signs that a potential disaster was afoot.

A special form of transactional interactivity involves the idea that (certain) humans possess the ability to summon divine assistance or directly exercise control over the natural environment by means of privileged knowledge (in the form of verbal formulae and/ or the manipulation of material substances thought to possess special powers). Conventional labels for such practices include 'magic', 'witchcraft', or 'sorcery', which in the modern imagination are often opposed to 'official religion'. But for our purposes the distinction is unhelpful: first, Rome's civic religion itself comprised such coercive ritual practices, notably the *dēuōtiō*, which involved a Roman general (or common soldier) vowing his life to the gods to secure victory in battle. And towards the end of *Aeneid* 4, Dido, Carthage's 'head of state', summons the gods for a similar act of self-sacrifice to secure death and disaster for Aeneas and his people.

At the same time, in the *Aeneid* 'transactional interactivity' must contend with (i.e., is severely restricted or compromised by) two countervailing variables, which are themselves at one level diametrically opposed to one another: character-full gods who have their own agendas and only listen to human overtures when it suits their purpose; and the idea of predestination.

(*b*) Wilful divinities: Greek mythmaking (as well as its Roman adaptations) features capricious divinities whose anthropomorphism extends beyond the corporeal to include psychology and emotions (often negative ones, such as resentment, envy, or hatred) familiar from humanity, turbo-charged by extraordinary power. They remain implicated in patterns of interactivity (not least in bearing grudges on accounts of slights suffered) but also pursue agendas of their own irrespective of human overtures. In the human sphere, such

divine agency may well cause harm and be perceived as unjust. For anyone interested in reliable interactions, such divinities are therefore problematic. But they have their uses: the premise of vengeful and self-interested gods is, for instance, an excellent way of explaining undeserved human suffering. By contrast, belief-systems that posit an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent deity struggle mightily with the so-called 'problem of theodicy': if the world is or could be perfect, how does one account for the presence of moral and physical evil, undeserved pain, and injustice?[6] Virgil embraces the potential of amoral divinities to account for chaos from the start via his figure of Juno. More generally, the fact that both Jupiter, the god in charge of providential order, and Juno, the goddess of contingent havoc, attract the epithet *omnipotēns* and have their hands on the levers of power (with neither being invested in justice per se) ensures a 'fractured metaphysics'. Not coincidentally reminiscent of the divisiveness of civil strife, this tug of war in heaven has predictably harmful consequences in the human sphere.

(*c*) Finally, predestination: in the world of the *Aeneid*, certain events have been fixed in scrolls of fate under the administration of Jupiter and the Parcae, the Ladies of Destiny ([1.22]*sīc uoluere Parcās* 'this was the destiny the Fates were unrolling').[7] Importantly, Virgil differentiates between certain (not all) future outcomes that are unalterable, and how to get there (possible paths are many). The *Aeneid* chronicles how fate finds its way through (literal and figurative) storms of contingency, i.e. events that could happen, but did not need to happen or could have happened otherwise were it not

6 See e.g. Danielson 1999: 144–6 *à propos* John Milton's desire in *Paradise Lost* to 'assert eternal providence, | And justify the ways of God to men' (1.25–6): 'The so-called theological problem of evil – the problem that a theodicy sets out in some degree to solve – can itself be seen as a problem concerning how to balance three fundamental propositions to which virtually all Christians, and perhaps others, assent: 1 God is all powerful (or omnipotent). 2 God is wholly good. 3 There is evil in the world. The question … is: if we assert any two of these three propositions, how can the remaining one make any sense?'

7 With his elevation of *fātum* to a central religious category of his epic, Virgil contravenes the conception of history that underwrote the political culture of republican Rome – an annalistic sequence of years with an open future. See Chapter 10: Gildenhard 373–76.

for specific agents, their motivations, and their (moral) choices. This is a brilliant move: readers might have found it a tad boring if Virgil only chronicled events already fixed in stone (or papyrus), with his character-puppets, human and divine, jerking their way to the final destination. What he does instead for the most part is to narrate events *not* preordained: he shows us history in the making, though what he recounts carries profound aetiological import for the future history of the Roman people and is designed to explain what at his point in time *had* become fixed since it had unfolded in time: the story of Rome from Aeneas to Augustus. (What comes 'after' the first *princeps* in terms of domestic politics is again very much open: the death of Marcellus, enshrined at the very centre of the epic signals the death of one possible future, i.e. smooth dynastic succession with the first designated heir apparent eventually taking over from Augustus. With this possibility 'dead' what is going to happen is anybody's guess, but no longer Virgil's concern in the *Aeneid*…)[8]

The existence of a partial 'archival record' of the future renders the future to a certain extent 'knowable', especially since some of what it holds in store has leaked. In the extended proem, we learn that Juno has gotten wind of the destruction to be inflicted by some latter-day Trojans on her city of Carthage, for which she harboured dreams of imperial ambitions 'if only the fates would allow it' (1.18*sī quā fāta sinant*), adding future injuries to past insults (the judgement of Paris, the abduction of Ganymede). Later Venus reminds Jupiter of promises of Roman world-dominion, which, it seems, he made in knowledge of the *fāta*, for which he is perhaps even responsible (1.234–7; cf. his response 257–8*manent immōta tuōrum | fāta tibī* 'the fates of yours remain unmoved').[9] Through various prophet figures, both human

8 Jupiter promises the Romans an empire without spatio-temporal boundaries (1.279*imperium sine fīne dedī* 'I have given empire without end') but that says nothing about domestic politics. Contrast the end of Ovid's *Metamorphōsēs*, written well into Augustus' reign, which engages with the problematics of dynastic succession far more explicitly.

9 Virgil has significant fun with the notion of destiny (not least to validate a realm of contingency), arguably nowhere more so than in Book 8, where Vulcan informs Venus, who has come with the offer of sex in return for a new set of armour for Aeneas, that she could have had a similar bargain back when Troy still stood: he would have been willing to arm the Trojans so they could have withstood the

and divine, at least partial knowledge of future events also reaches the human sphere. This scenario is quite different from standard modes of figuring out the future in republican Rome, which involved the interpretation of empirical signs sent by the gods or consultation and exegesis of a body of written oracles, involving designated individuals (religious functionaries and magistrates representing the civic community). But it of course aligns supremely well with Virgil's authorial self-promotion as a 'poet-prophet' (*uātēs*). In republican times, the ruling elite tried to suppress such figures since they claimed access to divine knowledge which challenged the senatorial hegemony in administering interaction with the divine sphere.[10] Conversely, the persona of the *uātēs* is ideally suited for articulating a re-thought (supernatural) reality that makes sense of the Augustan principate in historical perspective.

4 Limits and Possibilities of (Human) Agency

The combination of divinities with their own agendas (whether aligned with or opposed to the *fāta*) and unalterable fate offers tough conditions for conventional (transactional) human-divine interactivity. While not absent, it operates under severe restrictions; and success depends in part on the degree of insight into the workings of destiny (and hence the available space of contingency) afforded to different characters.

Some are conspicuously clueless about the religious realities of Virgil's literary world. Dido's sister Anna is a notable case in point. In her speech of advice to Dido at 4.31–53, she dismisses in proto-Epicurean fashion the notion of a conscious afterlife, which finds elaborate treatment in *Aeneid* 6, to convince Dido to stop caring about her deceased husband Sychaeus and embrace life and love with Aeneas (34). She follows this gaffe by asserting that Aeneas arrived

Greeks for another decade since 'neither the almighty Father nor Fate was unwilling that Troy stand or Priam live for ten years more' (8.398–9*nec pater omnipotēns Trōiam nec fāta uetābant | stāre decemque aliōs Priamum superesse per annōs*): yes, Troy had to fall; but when was up for (bedroom) negotiation. Cf. also 9.107–8.

10 See Chapter 10: Gildenhard 359–65.

in Africa 'with the gods' favour and Juno's aid' ([45]*dīs ... auspicibus, Iūnōne secundā*). The phrases drip with unintended irony: Juno had no intention whatsoever to blast Aeneas to Africa; she set out to sink his fleet and is here the exact opposite of *auspex* or *secunda*. The tempest that brought Aeneas Dido's way was not a favourable (in Latin: *secundus*, implied by Juno's attribute) breeze, but a destructive storm, not least for Anna herself and above all her sister. Advice out of touch with the facts is bound to prove flawed.

Another character in *Aeneid* 4 who struggles to find his religious bearings is Iarbas (4.198–218). Proud of his divine lineage, he invests a tremendous amount of resource into cultivating a special relationship with Jupiter and, according to the logic of transactional interactivity, feels entitled to some returns.[11] But when news reach him that Dido, who cheated him out of territory for her settlement only to refuse his offer of marriage, has now embraced a shipwrecked Trojan refugee instead, he feels that the economy of services on which he banked is out of kilter: if his enormous investment yields such poor dividends, he remonstrates, one might as well stop cultivating the relationship (and give up on the belief that the gods are interested in human worship). Iarbas is another character without privileged insight into divine psychology, the limits and possibilities of transactional interactivity, or the workings of fate; nor is he the beneficiary of direct communication from the divine sphere. Like most any ordinary mortal, he therefore needs to judge the efficacy of religious efforts (or lack thereof) indirectly: he uses the perceived injustices he has suffered as evidence to conclude that his faith in human-divine reciprocities has been misplaced.

By comparison, Aeneas has it made. As Destiny's Child he benefits from explicit divine guidance, reinforced, if necessary, by remedial attention when he happens to be slow on the uptake. Whenever Aeneas loses the plot, the gods (Venus, Jupiter, Mercury) sort matters out, to get him (and destiny) back on track. Aeneas is far from perfect as a

11 The (potentially hubristic) attitude registers at the lexical level. Virgil refers to Iarbas' address to Jupiter with the verb *ōrāre* ([204–5]*dīcitur ōrāsse*) rather than *precārī*: their semantics overlap, but with the former 'pleading a case with authority' is to the fore, with the later 'humble supplication'. See Wagenvoort 1980: 101–11.

religious agent, not least since at times (as in Carthage) he becomes oblivious to his preordained historical mission. Yet he is a privileged character nevertheless: whereas Dido is compelled to browse through bloody entrails to figure out the will of the gods (4.56–64), he receives instructions of what to do straight from the boss via priority air courier (4.265–76; 560–70). Also elsewhere in the poem, Aeneas derives advantage from divine insight and information, notably in Book 6. His understanding of fate and the divine remains satisfyingly incomplete. He does, for instance, not comprehend the scenes from Roman history that Vulcan has fashioned on his shield (8.730*rērumque ignārus imāgine gaudet*). But his degree of (intuitive) insight also into the future right down to the age of Augustus is infinitely superior to that of other characters.[12]

In terms of complexity and intrigue, by far the most interesting character is Dido, not least since her position vis-à-vis the religious coordinates of Virgil's world undergoes a significance development over the course of *Aeneid* 4, from ignorance to insight. The trajectory involves three basic stages, which roughly correspond to the three main parts of the book marked by the tag *at rēgīna*.[13] Dido starts as someone naively invested in the conventional paradigm of transactional interactivity (*stage* 1), turns into a disillusioned Job-figure who questions 'divine fairness' as an organising principle of the Olympian world-order, to the point of endorsing a proto-Epicurean view of non-interactive divinities (*stage* 2), and ends up as an empowered practitioner of retributive magic who manages to call into existence a curse on Aeneas and his people that will haunt him (and them) down the narrative (and the centuries), as a tragic complement to Jupiter's triumphalist destiny (*stage* 3). Crucially, the trajectory has an epistemological dimension: Dido becomes gradually aware of the constraints imposed on her by fated parameters and manages to find meaningful agency within the realm of contingency that Virgil preserves within his literary world. The three stages are worth a closer look:

Stage 1: together with her sister Anna and then on her own, Dido

12 A striking instance is 6.69–70, where he promises to the Sibyl the temple of Palatine Apollo Augustus would dedicate in 28 BCE.

13 1–295, 296–503, 504–705.

initially behaves like a religious functionary (magistrate or priest) in Rome's civic religion. After the sisters decide to pursue a love match and marriage alliance, they try to secure divine support for their plan through temple visits, heart-felt prayers, and lavish sacrifices. Their actions resemble those a magistrate of the Roman republic would perform before a major decision (such as when to engage in battle), and Virgil reinforces the affinity on the lexical level.[14] Dido and Anna are said to seek a 'pact' (*pax*) with the gods involving approval of the envisaged course of action or at least the conferral of freedom from divine anger.[15]

Dido also anticipates protocols of Rome's civic religion in the mode of divination she chooses to find out the divine response to her enquiry. As noted, in various religious systems across the ancient Mediterranean and Western Asia, including Rome's civic religion, such 'enquiries' are predicated on the assumption that the gods communicate their will by means of empirical signs, such as the peculiar constitution of the internal organs of sacrificial victims, especially the liver. The Romans seem to have adopted the divinatory practice of 'extispicy' from the Etruscans; in historical times, a college of priests, the so-called *haruspicēs*, was the official body in charge of this mode of human-divine communication, assisting the magistrates and the senate with their expertise.[16] In the *Aeneid*, Dido performs the extispicy herself, seemingly unassisted by religious specialists ([64]*spīrantia cōnsulit exta* 'she consults the quivering entrails'). Yet the entrails she inspects seem inconclusive, despite repeat consultations (if the first victim fails to provide the desired evidence – a 'liver-lobe up' as it were that the planned course of action has divine approval – one can always look into another). Virgil implies that the divinities with whom Dido interacts respond honestly to her enquiry by refusing to provide what she is looking for. Suffering from erotic insanity, she nevertheless proceeds with pursuing her man without

14 For a brief survey of Rome's 'civic religion', with much further bibliography, see Gildenhard 2011: 246–54.

15 See [56–7]*pācem* ... | *exquīrunt*, with *OLD* s.v. *pax* 2. Cf. Servius *ad loc*. *sacrificandō explōrant, an dīī uellent huic reī cōnsentīre* 'they explore through the performance of sacrifices whether the gods are willing to give this matter their blessing'.

16 See Fig. 19 with Stevens 2009 and de Grummond 2013. I owe these references to Katie Rask.

getting a green light from the gods. But a stable marriage alliance between Dido and Aeneas is simply not on the cards: it runs counter to predestined historical developments. Awareness of the fixed parameters of fate might have helped, but the sisters' minds are explicitly labelled as ignorant of the seer-prophets (65*heu uātum ignārae mentēs!*) who could have provided the requisite insights.[17]

Fig. 20: Liver of Piacenza, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Foie_de_Plaisance.jpg; background adjusted

Stage 2: once Dido learns of Aeneas' decision to leave, she enters a confused condition of (theological) remonstration. She questions the fairness of Jupiter and Juno, denies the religious realities that Aeneas invokes to justify his decision, and desires forms of revenge precluded by fate.[18] She is in limbo: the experience of acute injustice shatters her naiveté, leading her to relinquish some of her religious certainties. Initially, she struggles to re-establish a coherent outlook; yet increasingly, she finds her bearings and begins to settle on unconventional religious

17 Interpretation of the phrase is disputed: see Commentary for details.
18 See esp. 382–4 where she hopes for Aeneas' imminent death in a shipwreck.

know-how ('magic') further empowered by suicidal self-sacrifice. She thereby manages to regain agency now aligned with the cosmic coordinates of Virgil's literary world.[19]

Stage 3: with new-found clarity and clairvoyant purpose (cf. [508]*haud ignāra futūrī*) Dido begins the final part of her religious journey with a powerful invocation of 'alternative' divinities – not (just) those dwelling on Mt. Olympus but the numinous forces of Hell responsible for retributive justice (509–21). Thus, when the news of Aeneas' departure reaches her, she is ready to pronounce her world-historical curse (590–629), followed and countersigned by her suicide. As noted, the logic here is akin to the Roman ritual of *dēuōtiō*, an extreme form of transactional interactivity: Dido gives her life in return for the efficacy of her curse.[20] She may be *furēns* and acting under the impact of *furor* ([697]*accēnsa furōre*) but in turn becomes a fury-like figure (an *ultrīx Dīra*) herself. Remarkably, in committing suicide she manages the impossible: to carry out an action in violation of (hence rupturing) fate and thereby turning into a fateful force herself.[21] Choice diction underscores Dido's empowerment in the final third of the poem. At 510 she literally 'thunders (the names of) three-hundred divinities' (*ter centum tonat ōre deōs*), a use of *tonāre* difficult to parallel (*OLD* 3b). The verb turns Dido subliminally into an anti-Jupiter with Jupiter-like powers.[22] And she concludes her curse with the first ever attestation of the composite verb [629]*imprecor*.[23]

Dido's curse completes Virgil's philosophy of history, not least in how it pairs up with the hatred of Juno. The goddess's hostility stems from two sources: she hates the Trojan people and their city because

19 A turning point is 450–1 when Dido starts pleading for death (*mortem ōrat*) after her attempt to persuade Aeneas to delay his departure via her sister Anna has failed.

20 Chapter 10: Gildenhard 354–55; Panoussi 2009.

21 See 4.696 with Chapter 11: Geisthardt and Gildenhard 410–16.

22 Unlike Iarbas, she supplicates rather than pleads ([521]*precātur*). With one exception, Virgil never uses *ōrāre* to refer to Dido's religious speech acts, though she does plead with Aeneas and Anna ([314–19]*ego … tē … ōrō*; [431]*nōn … ōrō*; [435]*extrēmam hanc ōrō ueniam*; [437]*tālibus ōrābat*. The exception is the unspecific [450]*mortem ōrat*: perhaps significantly, she needs to take care of this herself or at least force the issue.

23 At one level every Roman found himself in the position of Dido: with old certainties swept away by historical events, a new emerging normal needed to be negotiated. But none had her will, passionate intensity, and technical know-how to turn themselves into a reality-shaping, religious agent…

of the sexual humiliation she suffered through the judgement of Paris and Jupiter's erotically motivated abduction of the Trojan prince Ganymede; and she hates the future Romans because they are destined to conquer Carthage (1.12–28). As main surviving representative of the former collective and founding figure of the latter, Aeneas becomes the individualised target of her wrath even though he never provoked her personally and tries his best to appease her. With Dido's curse the inverse is the case: her rancorous rage is first and foremost directed at Aeneas, and in the prayer at 509–21 he is the only target of her vengeful fury. But in the final curse she extends liability for his transgressions to his kin, his friends, and his people. (The blurring of the ethnic collective and its outstanding representative is of course typical of monarchic ways of thinking socio-political community.) Both Juno's hatred and Dido's curse imbricate the personal and the political and, especially in combination, have significant aetiological potential: they help to explain the tragedies that continue to befall Aeneas and his Romans both in Virgil's epic and down the centuries.

5 Conclusion

Rome's civic religion, which evolved in part the way it did to ensure and enhance consensual decision-making among members of the ruling elite, struggled constitutionally to cope with the phenomenon of internecine warfare in the dying years of the republic. Unsurprisingly, the Romans became theologically creative to help make sense of the chaos of civil strife. Virgil joins other late-republican and imperial authors who employed the idea of inexplicable divine punishment or a long-standing curse to account for socio-political breakdown. In his speech on behalf of Marcellus (*Prō Mārcellō*, delivered in front of Caesar in 46 BCE), Cicero argues that the immortal gods, in stirring up civil war, might have exacted retribution from the Roman people for some transgression (*Marc.* 18: *ob aliquod dēlictum*). Horace thought he knew that the transgression in question was Romulus' fratricide of Remus at the city's foundation.[24] And Virgil, in the *Georgics* (composed

24 Horace, *Epode* 7.17–20 *sīc est: acerba fāta Rōmānōs agunt | scelusque frāternae necis, | ut*

in the 30s BCE), blamed Troy's founder Laomedon for perpetrating a transgression (cheating Apollo and Poseidon out of their wages) that then continued to haunt the Romans.[25] But in the following decade, he switched to Dido's curse instead: it enabled him to centre all of Roman history, the triumphs and the tragedies, in a representative of the now fully established ruling family, which had, moreover, begun to invest heavily in its claim to Trojan ancestry but represented a different 'branch' of Trojan royalty from that of Laomedon, Priam, and Hector.[26]

That does not mean that the conventional procedures of transactional interactivity became irrelevant. In the *Aeneid*, too, prayers, sacrifices, and the interpretation of divine signs remain meaningful activities. But they now operate alongside other modes of supernatural world-making that manifest an autocratic imprint. When the epic begins, Rome's triumphs are already in the books (of fate) and three historical vistas in particular (Jupiter's speech to Venus in Book 1, Anchises' speech to Aeneas in Book 6, and Vulcan's ecphrasis on the shield of Aeneas in Book 8) offer a 'preview' of some of them. The tragedies, however, are not yet set in stone. It is an unforeseen and unpredictable series of events triggered by Juno's implacable wrath that ultimately results in Dido's curse, which is ideally suited to 'explain' both catastrophes in international affairs (Hannibal above all) and domestic politics (civil war). In the *Aeneid*, Virgil thereby manages to aetiologically prefigure the entirety of Roman history down to the 20s BCE and in so doing reconfigures the past by endowing it with an ineluctable Augustan teleology. Overall, then, Virgil's theology is composite but coherent and aligns well with the emerging realities of the Augustan principate. This also includes one key element not yet considered: the headline quality of his hero, i.e. *pietās*.[27]

immerentis flūxit in terram Remī | sacer nepōtibus cruor 'That's it: a cruel fate and the crime of a brother's murder have driven the Romans on, ever since the innocent Remus' blood was spilt on the ground, blood that has brought a curse on his descendants'.

25 *Georgics* 1.501–2, later followed by Horace, *Ode* 3.3.18–24.

26 For Aeneas' claim to Trojan succession see Gowers 2011.

27 See the following essay.

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Fig. 21: 'When Pietās kills Pietās'.

Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677), Aeneas' fight with Mezentius and Lausus, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wenceslas_Hollar_-_Aeneas%27_fight_with_Mezentius_and_Lausus_(State_2)_2.jpg

Essay 5: Transvaluating *Pietās*

Aeneas epithet *pius* invites assessment of his character against the quality he is meant to embody.[1] And much scholarship on the *Aeneid* does precisely this: evaluate Aeneas' conduct in the epic against the benchmark of *pietās*, taken to constitute a uniform and admirable norm often vaguely defined with reference to its two English derivates of 'piety' and 'pity'. Judged against this standard, Aeneas is frequently found wanting, not least in his killing of Turnus at the epic's close. By the time Virgil composed the *Aeneid*, however, *pietās* itself had become a profoundly problematic quality, and its place and significance in Roman political culture were undergoing intense re-negotiation. Virgil is not just using *pietās* to profile Aeneas, he is using Aeneas (and the *Aeneid* more generally) to think through the problematics of *pietās*.[2] This mini-essay briefly sketches some of this historical background, as foil for Virgil's choice of turning a multi-layered and innovative conception of *pietās* (alongside the adjectives *pius* and *impius*) into a fundamental coordinate in and of his literary universe.

1. Historical Background

Pietās is a composite notion. Etymologically related to dealings with the gods,[3] it combines affect with obligation (or self-subordination). Two

1 This essay is a sequel to the paper 'For God and Country or Poison for the Body Politic? *Pietas* and the Problematics of a Para-Civic Virtue', which I presented at the conference *Pietas prima di Enea: Identità romana e radici repubblicane* (Pisa, June 2025). I am profoundly grateful to Chiara Caporale and Luca Onorato for the invitation and to Alessandro Schiesaro for posing the question during the Q&A this follow-up essay tries to answer. I am also much indebted to Victoria Rimell for critical feedback during a seminar in Warwick, where I had the opportunity to present some of this material.

2 See e.g. Powell 2008, Tarrant 2012: 16–30, and Morgan 2014.

3 de Vaan 2008: 468.

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possible glosses are 'dutiful devotion' and 'affective loyalty'. Handbooks tend to parrot the idea that Romans routinely practised *pietās* towards gods, country, and kin.[4] But a vetting of the c. 300 instances of *pietās* concerning the republican centuries shows that its targets are very unevenly distributed. In those sources that concern members of Rome's ruling elite, interpersonal *pietās* accounts for the lion's share of attestations, especially vertically upwards (from children towards parents) or horizontal (between siblings). Conversely, many a source registers a latent tension between kinship *pietās* and *pietās* towards country (*pietās ergā patriam*). And *pietās* towards the gods was of marginal significance and in crucial respects deliberately sidelined in Rome's civic religion (= those beliefs and practices that informed interactions of Rome's civic community via its designated representatives with the divine sphere).[5]

The merging of a sense of duty with affect is a powerful source of motivation that tends to attract respectful admiration. But the unconditional subservience to a person or cause is not an unproblematic quality, at least at the societal level. And in the dying years of the republic, kinship *pietās*, the variant that dominates the historical record, had started to become toxic: it helped fuel the *furor* ('madness') of civil war: 'Loyalty to the ties of kinship in politics was a supreme obligation, often imposing inexpiable vendettas. Hence the role of the words "*pius*" and "*pietas*" in the revolutionary wars.'[6] In the wake of Pharsalus and the subsequent death of Pompey, his two sons continued their father's fight under the banner of *pietās*.[7] And after Julius Caesar's assassination on the Ides of March 44 BCE, it was Marc Antony's and Caesar Octavianus' turn to appeal to *pietās* in authorizing the pursuit of vengeance for their

4 See e.g. *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edition, Oxford 2005, entry by William Chase Greene updated by John Scheid: '***pietas*** is the typical Roman attitude of dutiful respect towards gods, fatherland, and parents and other kinsmen…'.

5 I am summarizing findings presented in Gildenhard (forthcoming). See also Schröder 2012.

6 Syme 1939: 157, cited by Santangelo 2023: 226 (cf. 227: '... it is quite possible that *pietas* may be poisoning everything…').

7 Appian, *Bellum Cīuīle* 2.104 (battle of Munda): 'Caesar drew up his forces for battle near Corduba. On this occasion, as before, he gave "Venus" as the password, while Pompeius [= Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (the younger)] gave "Piety" for his.' His other son Sextus put *Pius* into his nomenclature: Welch 2012: 103–4.

murdered benefactor and kin, arguably to the point of human sacrifice[8] – despite Cicero's delusional claim that Octavian placed *pietās* towards country over filial *pietās*.[9]

The prolonged history of suicidal infighting in the name of (kinship) *pietās* forms the backdrop for a dynamic transvaluation of *pietās* in the 20s BCE, which saw efforts to detoxify its association with revenge obligations in the context of civil war and to adapt it to the autocratic realities of the emerging principate. As part of the constitutional settlement of 28/27 BCE, the senators awarded Caesar Octavianus the honorary title Augustus together with a so-called 'shield of virtue' (*clupeus uirtūtis*) that listed *uirtūs* ('martial prowess'), *clēmentia* ('clemency'), *iūstitia* ('justice'), and *pietās ergā deōs patriamque* ('dutiful devotion towards gods and country') as the qualities they specifically valued (or would like to see) in the *princeps*.[10] The set obliquely recognizes Augustus' (military) might (*uirtūs*), but promotes the idea of 'self-restrained omnipotence' through the only factor ultimately capable of limiting the exercise of autocratic power: the character and values of the reigning strongman. Operating above the law, the *princeps* ideally shows mercy (*clēmentia*), is interested in upholding justice (*iūstitia*), and practises dutiful reverence

8 Suetonius, *Dīuus Augustus* 15: 'After the capture of Perusia he took vengeance on many, meeting all attempts to beg for pardon or to make excuses with the one reply, "You must die." Some write that three hundred men of both orders were selected from the prisoners of war and sacrificed on the Ides of March like so many victims at the altar raised to the Deified Julius.'

9 Welch 2012: 142–53; Cicero, *Philippic* 13.46. Each warlord would of course argue that *their* loyalty towards kin also enacted loyalty towards gods and country… See Tacitus, *Annals* 1.9–10 (on retrospective controversies about Augustus' motivation after the Ides of March 44 BCE) *Hī pietāte ergā parentem et necessitūdine reī pūblicae, in quā nūllus tunc lēgibus locus, ad arma cīuīlia āctum, quae neque parārī possent neque habērī per bonās artīs*… 'According to some, filial duty and the needs of a country, which at the time had no room for law, had driven him to the weapons of civil strife—weapons which could not be either forged or wielded with clean hands…' 10 *dīcēbātur contrā: pietātem ergā parentem et tempora reī pūblicae obtentuī sūmpta; cēterum cupīdine dominandī concītōs per largītiōnem ueterānōs*… 'On the other side it was argued that filial duty and the critical position of the state had been used merely as a cloak: come to facts, and it was from the lust of dominion that he excited the veterans by his bounties…'

10 See the inscription of the copy of the shield found at Arles (26 BCE): SENATVS | POPVLVSQVE ROMANVS | IMP CAESARI DIVI F AVGVSTO | COS VIII DEDIT CLVPEVM | VIRTVTIS CLEMENTIAE | IVSTITIAE-PIETATIS-ERGA | DEOS PATRIAMQVE 'The Senate and the Roman People gave to the emperor Augustus, the son of deified Caesar, a shield of (martial) excellence, mercy, justice, and dutiful devotion towards gods and country' with Seston 1954 and Welch 2012.

of the gods as privileged intermediary between the civic community and the divine sphere (*pietās ergā deōs patriamque*; at some level, the phrase constitutes a hendiatris: 'patriotic devotion to the gods').

The senators knew what they were doing when they identified two specific variants of *pietās* they prized in their *princeps* (deferential respect for gods and country) and left out the variant that acquired such commanding influence in the political culture of the Roman republic and became so toxic in late-republican politics (non-negotiable *pietās*-obligations towards kin). Tellingly, in his autobiographic retrospect Augustus fails to acknowledge the restrictive understanding of *pietās* that the senate wished to promote (*Rēs Gestae* 34):

> For this service, I was named Augustus by senatorial decree, and the doorposts of my house were publicly clothed with laurels, and a civic crown was fastened above my doorway, and a golden shield was set up in the Julian senate house; through an inscription on this shield the fact was declared that the Roman senate and people were giving it to me because of my valour, clemency, justice, and piety (*uirtūtis clēmentiaeque et iūstitiae et pietātis caussā*) [trans. Cooley 2009].

His reference to unqualified *pietās* of course does not rule out (indeed tacitly subsumes) *pietās ergā deōs patriamque*. But the generic phrasing also leaves room for other variants of the quality. In particular, with a view to the republican uses of the term, kinship *pietās* towards his adoptive father Julius Caesar must have resonated, though now in an autocratic key: from the start, Augustus combined commitment to the ideal of the *princeps cīuīlis* ('civic-minded first-citizen') who notionally interacted with other members of the ruling elite as *prīmus inter parēs* ('first among equals') with dynastic aspirations focused on lineage continuity.[11] And one may wonder to what extent the unqualified presence of *pietās* in the *Rēs Gestae* was designed to enable novel understandings of the term, such as *pietās* as dutiful benevolence of the autocrat towards his people – not necessarily something *senators* would wish to advocate since it elevated rather than confined the *princeps* in the spirit of a *pater patriae* who can expect the *pietās* of those under his *patria potestās* ('paternal power') in turn.[12]

11 These ambitions found monumental expression in his Mausoleum, construction of which already began in 28 BCE. See further Stevenson 2013.

12 In imperial Rome, the emperor also became an obvious *target* of *pietās*: see e.g.

In short, by the time Virgil composed the *Aeneid*, *pietās* had become a key site for thinking through Rome's (recent) past, (precarious) present, and (possible) futures, and Virgil jumped right into the fray. The *Aeneid* offers a sustained exploration (and explanation) of the paradox that *pietās* had become both a historical plight as fueling civil war and, as a quality of the *princeps* associated with the 'constitutional settlement' of 28/27 BCE, part of a vision for a more peaceful (if autocratic) future. In his epic contribution, Virgil gives due consideration to all variants attested for the republican centuries: interpersonal *pietās* (in both its salvific and its toxic forms), *pietās* towards country, and *pietās* towards the gods. But he does not stop there: he builds *pietās* and its opposite *impietās* (in the form of the adjective *impius*) into his cosmic architecture and operates with innovative categories such as *pia nūmina* 'righteous divine forces interested in retributive justice', 'the (religiously) righteous' (*piī*, adjective used as a noun), a category that implicitly includes himself as poet-prophet (*uātēs*), or the idea that the Romans conceived in terms of an ethnic collective were a *gēns pia*, i.e. a people distinctive for its *pietās*. The following attempts to map out the place and function of (*im*)*pius* and *pietās* in Virgil's literary world, starting with the cosmic (both in the beyond and the here and now) before moving on to the interpersonal.[13]

2. (*im*)*pietās* in the beyond

Virgil embeds the distinction between *piī* and *impiī* in the eschatological cosmology of the *Aeneid*. At least in the beyond, there is a clear separation of 'the righteous' and 'the nefarious'. From beyond the grave Anchises informs his son that he does not reside in the accursed regions of Tartarus (*impia Tartara*) but amid 'the sweet assemblies of the blest' (*amoena piōrum concilia*) (5.733–5). And when Aeneas on his underworld travels reaches a fork in the road (turn right for Elysium and left for

Velleius Paterculus 2.71.1: Corvinus Messalla, a most brilliant young man and next in influence to Brutus and Cassius in their camp (there were those who demanded him as leader), preferred to be saved by Caesar's kindness than to make a further test of war's doubtful hopes; and there was nothing more delightful for Caesar in his victories than having saved Corvinus, nor was there a greater example of someone's gratitude and devotion (*maius exemplum hominis grātī ac piī*) than Corvinus' to Caesar.

13 See the Appendix for the distribution of these words across the poem.

the [6.543]*impia Tartara*) he also learns what types of humans inhabit these regions (6.608–14, the Sibyl speaking):[14]

> Hīc quibus inuīsī frātrēs, dum uīta manēbat,
> pulsātusue parēns, et fraus innexa clientī,
> aut quī dīuitiīs sōlī incubuēre repertīs
> nec partem posuēre suīs (quae maxima turba est),
> quīque ob adulterium caesī, quīque arma secūtī
> impia nec ueritī dominōrum fallere dextrās,
> inclūsī poenam exspectant.

> [Here were they who in lifetime hated their brethren, or smote a sire, and entangled a client in wrong; or who brooded in solitude over wealth they had won, nor set aside a portion for their kin—the largest number this; who were slain for adultery; or who followed accursed weapons, and feared not to break allegiance with their lords—all these, immured, await their doom.] [15]

Among the activities that qualify for entry into Hell, violations of norms built into *fidēs* and *pietās*, designed to safeguard interpersonal relationships in the family and the wider community, feature prominently, as does participation in civil war, cued both by hatred between brothers and the phrase [612–13]*arma …| impia*: in his previous writings, the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, Virgil did not use the noun *pietās* at all and the adjective *pius* only once;[16] but he programmatically invests in *impius* as an index of nefarious transgression and socio-political collapse in civil-war violence.[17]

Conversely, further down the road, we learn about those dwelling in the groves of the blissed. They include Virgil's own notional ancestors

14 As elsewhere I am citing the Loeb translation with occasional adjustments. The wide variety of English equivalents for (*im*)*pius*/*pietās* used in one translation conveys a sense of the iridescent semantics of the terms.

15 As Horsfall 2014: 423 notes, Virgil keeps his sinners generic: it is impossible to divide Virgil's 'groups neatly into conventional categories ("mythical", "Roman", etc.).' Cosmopoesis is by definition universalising.

16 *Georgics* 3.513 *dī meliōra piīs* 'May the gods grant a happier lot to the righteous', in the context of plague-induced insanity among farm animals.

17 *Eclogues* 1.70 *impius mīles* 'the impious soldier'; *Georgics* 1.468 *impia saecula* 'impious ages', 1.511 *impius Mārs* 'impious God of War', 2.537 *impia gēns* 'impious race'. Cf. *Georgics* 1.505 *fās uersum atque nefās* (the inversion of divine law and religious transgression with reference to civil war). Powell 2008: 31–2.

(6.660–6):

> Hīc manus ob patriam pugnandō uulnera passī,
> quīque sacerdōtēs castī, dum uīta manēbat,
> quīque piī uātēs et Phoebō dīgna locūtī,
> inuentās aut quī uītam excoluēre per artēs,
> quīque suī memorēs aliquōs fēcēre merendō
>
> [Here is the band of those who suffered wounds, fighting for their country; those who in lifetime were priests and pure, good bards, whose songs were meet for Phoebus; or they who ennobled life by arts discovered and they who by service have won remembrance among men]

It is a broad church of excellence grounded primarily in civic and religious ethics but also recognizing other forms of distinction. Importantly, Virgil subtly differentiates by way of qualifying specifications: not any show of martial prowess (*uirtūs*) qualifies; only those are explicitly included who suffered wounds on behalf of the community.[18] Likewise, the modification of *sacerdōtēs* with the attribute *castī* can be read generically (in the sense of 'all priests are by definition pure') or taken to imply that otherworldly rewards await only those priest who remained true to their calling. The same applies to *piī uātēs*: are all *uātēs* by definition *piī* or only those who enact *pietās*?[19]

Whether and if so in what sense Virgil's eschatological system of reward and punishment enacts 'justice' (however understood) is a separate issue, and one Virgil is keen to raise at least in passing. In her account of the doom that awaits those consigned to Tartarus, the Sibyl cites the warning that Phlegyas, under torture, issues to all and sundry: [620]*'discite iūstitiam monitī et nōn temnere dīuōs*' 'Be warned; learn to be just and not to slight the gods!'[20] Just like *pietās*, the meaning of *iūstitia* was under negotiation in Augustan Rome; unlike *pietās*, *iūstitia* was a term of marginal import in the political culture of the Roman republic,

18 In a situation of civil war, this category of course becomes problematic…

19 The idea of *pietās* as an organising principle of the cosmos recurs in Book 8. On the shield he fashions for Aeneas, Vulcan again separates the regions of Tartarus ([667]*Tartareās … sēdēs*) were the wicked receive their punishment from the dwelling places of the righteous to whom Cato issues laws ([670]*sēcrētōs … piōs*, *hīs dantem iūra Catōnem*).

20 For discussion of this complex passage see Zetzel 1989 and O'Hara 2007: 95.

though begins to take on central significance under the principate. Responding, not least, to the presence of *iūstitia* on the shield of virtues, Virgil rehearses different variants of justice in the *Aeneid*, including (as here) that of the gods.[21] But for exploring the problematics of 'divine justice' more broadly, he draws primarily on the idiom of (*im*)*pietās*.[22]

3. (*im*)*pietās* of/ towards divine figure in the (narrative) here and now

3.1 Tracking *impius* ('wicked') in the *Aeneid*

Against this cosmic backdrop, the label '*impius*' acquires special resonance in the 'here and now' of the narrative. Certain characters are thus stigmatised by others: Dido's brother Pygmalion (by Venus), Diomedes (by Aeneas), and Aeneas (by Dido).[23] In addition, the narrator slaps the attribute on the figure of *Fāma* (4.298) – in latent contrast to the *uātēs piī* of 6.662 (and perhaps 4.464) as well as (presumably) Virgil himself, though his own affinity with the figure of *Fāma* (not least in what he does to Dido) tangles things up.

Finally, two programmatic references to 'wicked (civil) war' frame the narrative and feed right into the aetiological and teleological aspiration of the epic. Latinus, at the opening of Book 12 regretfully concedes that he has taken up 'nefarious arms' ([31]*arma impia sūmpsī*) in opposing Aeneas,[24] thereby prefiguring the historical phenomenon that the Romans would have to contend with right down to the battle of Actium in 31 BCE. But with the transition to the principate the prospect of a more peaceful future beckons as Jupiter announces in a prophetic anticipation at the *outset* of the epic (1.291–6):

21 Gildenhard 2026.

22 He builds on a view of the divine that has literary precedents in certain plays of Plautus (especially *Poenulus* and *Rūdēns*), Catullus, and Cicero's *Dē Lēgibus*.

23 1.348–9, 2.163–4, 4.496. Cf. 4.496 where Dido refers to *facta impia*, arguably both her own and those of Aeneas.

24 See Tarrant 2012: 95 who cites previous passages carrying the same message ([7.595]*ipsī hās sacrilegō pendētis sanguine poenās* and 7.583–4 *īnfandum … contrā ōmina bellum, | contrā fāta deum, peruersō nūmine* and notes that 'one category of *arma impia* is civil war (cf. 6.612–13), and some of Latinus' language has resonances of Rome's civil wars.'

aspera tum positīs mītēscent saecula bellīs;
cāna Fidēs et Vesta, Remō cum frātre Quirīnus
iūra dabunt; dīrae ferrō et compāgibus artīs
claudentur Bellī portae; Furor impius intus
saeua sedēns super arma et centum uīnctus aēnīs
post tergum nodīs fremet horridus ōre cruentō.

[Then wars shall cease and savage ages soften; hoary Faith and Vesta, Quirinus with his brother Remus, shall give laws. The gates of war, grim with iron and close-fitting bars, shall be closed; within, impious Rage, sitting on savage arms, his hands fast bound behind with a hundred brazen knots, shall roar in the ghastliness of blood-stained lips.]

The passage holds out the prospect that the forces of chaos may finally end up chained (though *Furor impius*, like the winds in Aeolus' cave, continuously threatens to rupture his bonds to wreak renewed havoc on the world). And Virgil situates such resolution in the temporal beyond of his literary world, which guarantees the requisite degree of engaging complexity within the epic, not least around the notion of *pietās*.

3.2 Divine attitudes towards human *pietās*

Virgil begins the *Aeneid* with the startling keynote that the efficacy of *pietās ergā deōs* is at times severely curtailed: despite his renown for dutiful devotion to his socio-political and religious obligations, Juno's savage fury harasses the epic's eponymous hero for twelve long books. Other passages reinforce the point that in Virgil's literary world piety and justice are frequently powerless against the forces of chaos and destruction. One of the most striking instances is 2.426–30 (Aeneas speaking):

cadit et Rhāpeus, iūstissimus ūnus
quī fuit in Teucrīs et seruantissimus aequī
(*dīs aliter uīsum*); pereunt Hypanisque Dymasque
cōnfīxī ā sociīs; nec tē tua plūrima, Panthu,
lābentem pietās nec Apollinis īnfula texit.

> [Rhipeus, too, falls, most just of all the Trojans, most zealous for the right, *but Heaven's will was otherwise*; Hypanis and Dymas perish, pierced by friends; nor could all your goodness, Panthus, nor Apollo's fillet shield you in your fall!]

iūstitia, *aequitās*, *pietās*: nothing sways the gods. Aeneas here bitterly and explicitly blames the gods for their sickening disregard for these qualities (428*dīs aliter uīsum*): his comrades reap no rewards for their stellar justice and piety, quite the contrary. In the domain of the epic narrative, which provides an aetiology for Roman history to come, *pietās* often has limited purchase.

Part of the problem is that the gods hold conflicting views on whether and if so which expression of *pietās* among humans is to be honoured. Venus remonstrates with Jupiter that Aeneas seems to receive no reward for his *pietās* in light of what he suffers at the hands of Juno (1.253*hic pietātis honōs?* 'And thus is piety honoured?'). She also raises the issue with Neptune in Book 5 to ensure safe voyage of the Trojan fleet from Sicily to the Italian mainland, noting the implacable hatred of Juno, 'whom no *pietās* softens' (5.783*quam ... pietās nec mītigat ūlla*). (Virgil leaves it open whether the *pietās* in question is Aeneas' or Juno's own. The meaning differs accordingly: if the former, the sense is 'dutiful devotion (primarily to the gods)', if the latter, it must signify something akin to 'pity'.) At the same time, Neptune proves supportive, even though he might well be expected to harbour a grudge against 'perjurious Troy', the city of king Laomedon he helped to build only to be cheated out of his wages. He notes the incident but reassures Venus that he has buried the hatchet and does not hold Aeneas responsible for what happened (5.799–815). Conversely, later in the poem, it is Juno's turn to bring up Turnus' *pietās* to protest the injustice of his fate.[25] The lack of divine consensus over what constitutes meritorious human *pietās ergā deōs* amounts to a variant of civic conflict and partly explains why humans

25 See 10.617*nunc pereat Teucrīsque piō det sanguine poenās* 'but now let him perish and with innocent blood make atonement to the Trojans!' The line drips with bitter sarcasm at the paradox that someone who (as far as Juno is concerned) has done no wrong will become a sacrificial victim. Juno here co-opts and adjusts a line from Ennius, *Annālēs* 95 (Skutsch), spoken by Romulus before killing his brother Remus: ... *nam mī calidō dabis sanguine poenās*. She thereby subliminally marks the showdown of Aeneas and Turnus as a prefiguration of Romulus' foundational fratricide (and in turn an index of the Roman civil wars to come).

experience unjust(ified) suffering: if not all supernatural beings honour the practice of dutiful devotion, its effectiveness has obvious limits.

But *pietās* is not entirely pointless, even before eschatological rewards kick in. Two prayers to Jupiter (one by Anchises, one by Aeneas) both uttered in the name of *pietās* stand out as strikingly efficacious. When Iulus' hair suddenly catches fire during the sack of Troy everyone rushes to extinguish the flames with the exception of Anchises who joyously recognizes the incident as the omen that it is. Just to make sure, he turns to Jupiter in prayer for a confirmation (2.689–91):

> 'Iuppiter omnipotēns, precibus sī flecteris ūllīs,
> aspice nōs, hoc tantum, et, sī pietāte merēmur,
> dā deinde auxilium, pater, atque haec ōmina fīrmā.'

> 'Almighty Jupiter, if you are moved by any prayers, look upon us – this only do I ask – and if our goodness earn it, give us your aid, Father, and ratify this omen!'

Jupiter obliges by unfurling a mighty thunder and releasing a comet.[26] Likewise, when Juno engineers a conflagration of the Trojan ships, *pius* Aeneas steps into the breach and addresses his divine ancestor (5.685–92):[27]

> tum pius Aenēās umerīs abscindere uestem
> auxiliōque uocāre deōs et tendere palmās:
> 'Iuppiter omnipotēns, sī nōndum exōsus ad ūnum
> Trōiānōs, sī quid pietās antīqua labōrēs
> respicit hūmānōs, dā flammam ēuādere classī
> nunc, pater, et tenuīs Teucrum rēs ēripe lētō;
> uel tū, quod superest, īnfēstō fulmine mortī,
> sī mereor, dēmitte tuāque hīc obrue dextrā.'

> [Then loyal Aeneas rent the garment from his shoulders, and called the gods to his aid, lifting up his hands: 'Almighty Jupiter, if you do not yet utterly abhor the Trojans to their last man, if your loving-kindness of old has any regard for human sorrows, grant

26 An anticipation of the *sīdus Iūlum*: see Essay 3: Allusion 56. Further Pandey 2013.

27 Cf. [6.123]*et mī genus ab Ioue summō* 'I, too, have descent from Jove most high!'

to the fleet to escape the flame even now, Father, and snatch from doom the slender fortunes of the Trojans! Or if I deserve it, do you with levelled thunderbolt send down to death the little that remains, and here overwhelm us with your hand.']

The prayer is instantly followed by a salvific downpour.[28] The senators responsible for the inscription on the shield of virtues had a point when they identified *pietās ergā deōs* as a valuable quality in an autocrat.[29]

And there is light at the end of the tunnel. In the final scene between Jupiter and Juno, the collective *pietās* of the Romans towards Juno especially forms the basis for a final reconciliation (12.838–41, Jupiter speaking):

'...
hinc genus Ausoniō mixtum quod sanguine surget,
suprā hominēs, suprā īre deōs pietāte uidēbis,
nec gēns ūlla tuōs aequē celebrābit honōrēs.'
adnuit hīs Iūnō et mentem laetata retorsit.

[From them shall arise a race, blended with Ausonian blood, which you will see overpass men, overpass gods in loyalty, and no nation will celebrate your worship with equal zeal." Juno assented to this and joyfully changed her purpose.]

Virgil here brings together his innovative conception of the Romans as an ethnic collective (*genus*, *Ausoniō mixtum ... sanguine*, *gēns*) and his innovative theology of *pietās*. Jupiter has already reassured Juno that the cultural markers of Trojan identity which she finds so triggering will disappear, even though Trojan DNA will be a constitutive part of the new ('mixed') Roman race.[30] Now he adds that they will excel even the gods in *pietās* (with Juno perhaps setting a rather low bar...) and will dedicate

28 For the fact that *pius* Aeneas here appeals to Jupiter's *pietās*, see the next section.

29 Another character who invokes a record of *pietās* to reinforce a (partially) successful prayer is the despicable Arruns (11.785–93). He illustrates that devout worship of the gods need not imply any ethics, though maybe partly for that reason Apollo only grants him half of his (also religiously flawed) prayer.

30 12.835–7 ... *commixtī corpore tantum | subsīdent Teucrī. mōrem rītūsque sacrōrum | adiciam faciamque omnīs ūnō ōre Latīnōs* 'the Teucrians shall but sink down, merged in the mass. I will give them their sacred laws and rites and make them all Latins of one tongue.'

this quality to upholding her honours. Juno finally has the answer to the rhetorical question she posed at the beginning of the poem before unleashing the first jolt of the negative energy that animates the epic's plot ([1.48–9]'*... et quisquam nūmen Iūnōnis adōrat | praetereā aut supplex ārīs impōnet honōrem?*' 'And will any still worship Juno's godhead or humbly lay sacrifice upon her altars?').

Juno seems well satisfied, though it remains unclear whether she has read the fine print of the compromise Jupiter proposes. One of the many unresolved ironies consists in the fact that the ethnic component that contributes the quality of *pietās* to the racial admixture (or at least a significant dose thereof) seems to be Trojan: [1.526]*pium genus*, [7.21]*piī Trōēs*.[31] Another related one concerns the concentration of *pietās Trōiāna* in the *gēns* of Anchises and Aeneas, the son of her immortal rival Venus (herself the illegitimate offspring of Jupiter). The special affinity of representatives of the *gēns Iūlia* (as quintessential representatives of the *gēns Rōmāna*), so the *Aeneid* implicitly argues, remains in place throughout the centuries and finds its most recent manifestation in Marcellus, Augustus' nephew, the son of his sister Octavia and first heir apparent, who died prematurely in 23 BCE. Anchises tries to put a positive spin on this tragedy (a live Marcellus would have pushed Roman greatness into the realm of hubris);[32] but why a character of outstanding *pietās*, *fidēs*, and martial prowess ([6.878–9]*heu pietās*, *heu prīsca fidēs inuictaque bellō | dextera!* 'Alas for his goodness, alas for his chivalrous honour and his sword arm unconquerable in war!') should have upset the gods remains an open question.

3.3 *pietās* as a quality *of* the divine – and as divine interest in (retributive) justice

In his prayer to Jupiter at 5.685–92 (cited above), Aeneas credits Jupiter with a track-record of enacted *pietās* (5.688) and in his concluding

31 For Turnus, the Trojans are a *gēns scelerāta* 'a criminal people' (9.138), just as for Dido Aeneas is *impius*. There is a bit of rewriting history going on. Virgil is whitewashing the legendary record of cheating the gods that in the *Georgics* he used to explicate the trauma of civil war. He negotiates this story very carefully in the *Aeneid* (see Commentary 504–6).

32 6.870–1 *nimium uōbīs Rōmāna prōpāgō | uīsa potēns, superī, propria haec sī dōna fuissent* 'Too powerful, o gods above, you deemed the Roman people, had these gifts of yours been lasting'.

conversation with Juno, Jupiter himself recognizes *pietās* as a quality that gods too (may) possess. These are not the only places in the poem where gods appear as proprietors of *pietās*. At 3.75 *pius* is the attribute of Apollo, here referred to with his alias *Arquitenēns* 'Arch-Bearer'. The combination carries disquieting connotations. It evokes not just filial *pietās* in general but, specifically, its murderous manifestations in the context of revenge. Notoriously, Apollo teamed up with his sister Diana to kill the fourteen children of Niobe as punishment for her verbal slight of their mother Latona with their bows and arrows.[33] This is the kind of kinship *pietās* that started to become toxic in late-republican Rome, here obliquely projected onto the divine. But the violence *pius* Apollo is able to wield can also be protective. He stands in typological relation to Aeneas and Augustus, which finds striking visual articulation on the shield of Vulcan where Augustus and his divine patron wage war on behalf of Italy and SPQR against the forces of chaos led by Antony and Cleopatra.[34]

The idea that a certain variant of divine *pietās* safeguards cosmic order also registers obliquely in the first simile of the epic, where Virgil compares Neptune's calming of the storm unleashed by Juno to a senior statesman relying on weighty *pietās* to pacify a violent mob (1.147–52):

> ac uelutī magnō in populō cum saepe coorta est
> sēditiō, saeuitque animīs īgnōbile uulgus,
> iamque facēs et saxa uolant, furor arma ministrat;
> tum pietāte grauem ac meritīs sī forte uirum quem
> cōnspēxēre, silent arrēctīsque auribus adstant;
> ille regit dictīs animōs et pectora mulcet.
>
> [And as, when ofttimes in a great nation tumult has risen, the base rabble rage angrily, and now brands and stones fly, madness lending arms; then, if perchance they set eyes on a man honoured

33 Heyworth and Morwood 2017: 106: 'Apollo will repeatedly appear in the narrative as far as 479, mainly as the oracular god; but his bow may remind us not only of his filial piety in using it to protect his mother (Miller 2009: 104) but also of *Iliad* 1, where he supports his priest Chryses, dishonoured by Agamemnon, and attacks the Greek army with plague arrows' with reference to Miller 2009: 104: 'To juxtapose the epithets *pius* and *arquitenens* in the context of honoring his birthplace perhaps conjures up the mythic pattern of Apollo protecting his mother with his bow – e.g. when attacked by Tityos or insulted by Niobe – but the archer-god's aspect is not threatening here.'

34 8.675–713; Miller 2009: 54–184.

> for noble character and service,[35] they are silent and stand by with attentive ears; with speech he sways their passion and soothes their breasts.]:

Virgil here uses *pietās* and *furor* to capture the contrast between cosmos and chaos, even though in other moments such as the epic's end (kinship) *pietās* in the sense of dutiful devotion to the 'wild justice' of punitive retaliation becomes indistinguishable from *furor* (or *furiae*). At the same time, the negative reciprocity of retribution is an aspect of *pietās* that some characters explicitly *demand* of the gods as part of *maintaining* cosmic order. Here is Priam's address to Achilles' son Pyrrhus, who is about to kill him, invoking *pietās* as a desirable quality of the gods when they witness nefarious outrage (2.536–38):

> at tibi prō scelere,' exclāmat 'prō tālibus ausīs
> dī, sī qua est caelō pietās, quae tālia cūret,
> persoluant grātēs dignās et praemia reddant
> dēbita …'
>
> ['For your crime, for deeds so heinous,' he cries, 'if in heaven there is any righteousness to mark such sins, may the gods pay you fitting thanks and render you due rewards …']

Priam goes beyond wishing for divine recognition of human *pietās*. He argues that *pietās*, which here means something akin to moral conscience that rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked, should also be a quality of the divine. This is an idea well-established especially in Greek thought but its articulation via the lexeme *pietās* has baffled scholars. Niklas Horsfall, for instance, glosses our passage with 'Divine pity conceived as recognition of human piety' (2008: 408). Both of his terms – perhaps not coincidentally the two vernacular derivatives of *pietās* in use in English – seem to miss the point. Priam neither wants pity nor

35 *pietāte grauem ac meritīs … uirum* is difficult to translate. One might gloss the phrase as 'a man respected/influential (*grauem*: *OLD* 13) owing to an outstanding record (*meritīs*) of dutiful devotion [sc. to country and the gods]' (taking *pietāte* and *meritīs* as a hendiadys). This is very much the *pietās* the senators put on the *clupeus uirtūtis* (rather than kinship *pietās*) and hence resonates in an Augustan key: there is no prior text that identifies *pietas* as a key factor in shaping interaction between a member of the ruling elite and the people. For a more conventionally 'republican' idiom cf. Cicero, *Brutus* 109 *uir et ōrātiōne grauis et auctōritāte*.

appeals to his piety. Rather, he desires (retributive) justice for criminal transgression: he wants his nefarious killer to get his comeuppance. With his sons dead, he outsources the dynamics of retaliation to the divine sphere.

Conversely, when Aeneas reveals himself to Dido, who has just offered 'forever hospitality' to his men, he concedes that it is not within his powers to render appropriate thanks (1.600–1*grātēs persoluere dignās | nōn opis est nostrae*), but hopes that the gods will provide her with proper rewards for her *pietās* and *iūstitia* (1.603–5):

> dī tibi, sī qua piōs respectant nūmina, sī quid
> usquam iūstitiae est, et mēns sibi cōnscia rēctī
> praemia digna ferant. 605
>
> [May the gods, if any divine powers have regard for the good, if there is any justice anywhere – may the gods and the consciousness of right bring you worthy rewards!]

The wish proves deeply ironic. And when this positive reciprocity does not materialise and Dido finds herself abandoned by both Aeneas and the gods, she, like Priam, decides to pursue the negative reciprocity of revenge in the idiom of *pietās*. She posits (non-Olympian) supernatural forces who are interested in retributive justice (4.382*sī quid pia nūmina possunt*) and knows how to interact with them efficaciously, engaging in the ritual side of things 'with pious hands' (517*manibus … piīs*; cf. 637 where she asks Barce to dress up with a headband in accordance with religious protocols: *piā … uittā*). With perfect logic she calls Aeneas not just *perfidus* but *impius*, shortly after he regained his epithet *pius* for deciding to leave Carthage. Conversely, Dido herself turns into a figure of (*im*)*pietās* or counter-*pietās* in executing the ritual of suicidal *dēuōtiō* that summons forces of infernal vengeance and countersigns her curse. Her curse seems successful in part because it is at some level justified: Dido escalates, but in the wild justice of revenge overseen by the Furies or *Dīrae* the scales tend to be off. The conceptual binary and historical coincidence of *pius*/ *impius* is again emblematic of civil war.[36] It arguably only gets fully exorcised with

36 A similar logic underwrites Amata's appeal to the *pietās* of the mothers of Latium at 7.400*sīqua piīs animīs manet … grātia* 'If in your loyal hearts still lives affection…'

Octavian's victory over Mark Antony and the death of Cleopatra.

The theological aspects of *pietās* in the *Aeneid* are thus manifold, covering a wide range of ideas from dutiful devotion on the part of humans to respect for human *pietās* on the part of the gods (and anger at its absence), which may manifest itself in pity or, indeed, the enactment of retributive justice. The partial failure of *pietās* in ensuring divine support enables Virgil to pose the question of 'divine justice' (theodicy), which involves expectations of 'transactional fairness' in human-divine relations, whether in formal-material terms (investment in worship ought to pay dividends) or in ethical terms (the righteous and devout should reap rewards of divine benevolence, whereas evil-doers are subjected to punitive measures). For Virgil – who is interested in retrospective aetiology – this is a feature not a fault: it enables him to account for the undeniable suffering in the world around him, including the absurdity of community-wide, suicidal slaughter. His cosmo-poetic design is perfectly suited to explain *everything* that has so far happened in Roman history. And the elaborate theology of *pietās* also frames Virgil's exploration of <u>interpersonal</u> *pietās*.

4. (Inter)personal *pietās*

As the Appendix shows, most instances of *pius* and *pietās* in the *Aeneid* pertain to Aeneas. But before we consider him, some other characters who display interpersonal *pietās*, in the sense of 'dutiful (unconditional) devotion to another human', deserve attention: Nisus, Euryalus (and his mother), and Lausus.

4.1 Nisus, Euryalus, and Euryalus' mother

Nisus and Euryalus are figments of Virgil's imagination. We first encounter them in *Aeneid* 5, in the context of funeral games for Anchises, where they are introduced as participants in the footrace: 5.295–6*Euryalus fōrmā īnsignis uiridīque iuuentā, | Nīsus amōre <u>piō</u> puerī* 'Euryalus famed for beauty and flower of youth, Nisus for <u>tender</u> (!) love for the boy' (Goold's translation). Commentators since Servius have twisted themselves into knots in trying to work out the precise (erotic) nature of Nisus' and Euryalus' relationship. Whatever that may have been,

the attribute *pius* does not afford us any clue: it doesn't mean 'pious' or 'tender' but refers to an affective disposition of unconditional devotion. The footrace illustrates that Nisus' limerence extends to unsportsmanlike and quasi-blasphemous cheating. About to win the race himself, he slips in sacrificial blood; yet despite falling right into 'the filthy slime and blood of sacrifice' (333*immundōque fimō sacrōque cruōre*), he does not forget his love (334*nōn ille oblītus amōrum*) and throws himself into the path of second-placed Salius, which enables Euryalus (initially in third place) to claim victory.

The curious scenario hints at a problematic relation between Nisus' peer-*pietās* and *pietās ergā deōs*,[37] which is borne out by what happens in *Aeneid* 9. With Aeneas gone in search of allies and the Trojan camp under attack from Turnus, Nisus and Euryalus come back into focus. They are identified as like-minded individuals (if not lovers) with a track record of charging into battle together (9.182*hīs amor ūnus erat pariterque in bella ruēbant*: 'a common love was theirs; side by side they would charge into battle').[38] Desirous of glory, Nisus proposes a night-excursion to reach Aeneas, starting with a rhetorical question that resonates in a blasphemous key: 9.184–5*dīne hunc ārdōrem mentibus addunt, | Euryale, an sua cuique deus fit dīra cupīdō?* 'Do the gods, Euryalus, put this fire into hearts, or does his own wild longing become to each man a god?'. In the ensuing council, they receive the green light as well as lavish parting gifts from Iulus, including, ominously, an ancient bowl of Dido's (9.266*crātēra antīquum quem dat Sīdōnia Dīdō*). In response, Euryalus earnestly asks Iulus to comfort his mother, whom he leaves behind without saying proper good-bye, moving everyone present to tears, and above all Iulus since 'the picture of filial/ paternal devotion touched his heart' (9.294*... animum patriae strīnxit pietātis imāgō*).[39] As son of Mr. Pietas he can relate, and his response to the filial devotion of Euryalus ensures that negotiation of the term's potential remains associated with

37 See Hardie 1993: 51–2, Casali 2004: 345 n. 44.

38 The primary meaning of *amor* here is 'passion for battle', but given the episode in Book 5 and what follows the term also resonates with erotic connotations, at least for Nisus.

39 The Latin leaves it open whether Iulus visualises the *pietās* of his father Aeneas towards him (paternal, in analogy of Euryalus' mother to her son) or his own *pietās* towards his father (filial, in analogy of Euryalus towards his mother) and thereby underscores the cross-generational reciprocity (rarely attested in our republican sources: *pietās* tends to be directed from children to parents).

the epic's eponymous hero.

Having set out without a proper prayer for divine support, Euryalus is betrayed by a ray of moonlight before Nisus issues a belated prayer to Luna (9.367–409) and both end up dead.[40] When *Fāma* brings the news to Euryalus' mother, she blames Euryalus for leaving her behind and reciprocates his filial with parental devotion in an imaginary address to his killers: [493]*fīgite mē, sī qua est pietās*... 'Pierce me, if you have any feeling...' The formulation is again curious: it projects the potential for *pietās* upon the killers and sees it enacted in another homicide. The sense here comes close to 'pity' manifesting itself in sacrificial slaughter ('piety'). The upshot is sobering: 'at the end of an episode which revolves around various relationships of *pietās* the only variety still available is a purely negative one.'[41] Overall, this cast of characters offers a meditation on the entropic potential of certain non-religious variants of *pietās* (erotically-charged peer-*pietās* and *pietās* towards kin) if these play themselves out without due regard for *pietās ergā deōs*.

4.2 Lausus, or when '*pietās* murders *pietās*'[42]

As the one explicit exploration of 'Greek love' in the *Aeneid*, Nisus and Euryalus re-enact an important aspect of the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus (if not in Homer, then certainly in the history of reception), in a displacement of sorts: apart from the Homeric foil (which as ever may work by way of contrast), the relationship between Aeneas and Evander's son Pallas, while echoing that between Achilles and Patroclus, is not *explicitly* characterised as homoerotic. But it does involve *pietās* at least implicitly. After Pallas' death and despoilment at the hands of Turnus, Aeneas goes on a lethal rampage, driven by a desire for retaliation hyper-charged by an acute sense of personal failure to safeguard his protégé. Like Dido, he escalates, to the point of taking prisoners for human sacrifice.[43] He thereby re-enacts Achilles' response to the death of Patroclus and prefigures Caesar Octavianus'

40 For the series of religious solecisms committed by the pair see Casali 2004.
41 Hardie 1994: 165.
42 Johnson 1965: 361.
43 10.515–20; cf. 11.81–84 with Gildenhard and Henderson 2018: 255–60.

'altars of Perugia'.[44] We are arguably dealing with an extreme variant of interpersonal *pietās* manifesting itself in a most barbaric religious practice, though Aeneas here thinks of his dereliction primarily as a breach of *fidēs*.[45] But he sports his epithet *pius* later on during his killing spree (591, 781), in the run-up to his showdown with the Etruscan tyrant Mezentius and his son Lausus, who comes to the aid of his wounded father.

Aeneas' confrontation with Lausus involves the most probing exploration of interpersonal *pietās* in the poem, insofar Aeneas here faces off against his mirror image. The distinctive hallmark of both heroes is *pietās*, as Aeneas himself recognizes, warning Lausus to step aside: [10.812]*fallit tē incautum pietās tua* 'your love (= your loyal devotion to your father) is betraying you into rashness'. Of course the warning is to no avail: 'genuine' kinship *pietās*, especially from son to father, is unconditional, up to and including self-sacrifice.[46] Looking upon his dying adversary, Aeneas inevitably sees himself (10.821–6):[47]

> At uerō ut uultum uīdit morientis et ōra,
> ōra modīs Anchīsiadēs pallentia mīrīs,
> ingemuit miserāns grauiter dextramque tetendit,
> et mentem patriae subiit pietātis imāgō.
> 'quid tibi nunc, miserande puer, prō laudibus istīs, 825
> quid pius Aenēās tantā dabit indole dignum?
> …'

44 See above 112–13.

45 10.515–17 *Pallās, Euandrus, in ipsīs | omnia sunt oculīs, mēnsae quās aduena prīmas | tunc adiit, dextraeque datae* 'Pallas, Evander, everything is before his eyes—the board to which he came then, a stranger, and the right hands pledged'.

46 Interpersonal *pietās* can assume a quasi-religious degree of non-negotiability. Cf. Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms (1521) [yes, that's the name of the event]: 'Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen.'

47 See Johnson 1976: 73: 'In the dead Lausus Aeneas recognizes, unconsciously, himself, or rather, the part of himself that he most respects, that is most essentially his true self', though I wonder about 'unconsciously'. See further Stover 2011, who explores the assimilation of Aeneas and Lausus via nomenclature: both names can mean 'Mr. Praiseworthy', Aeneas' in Greek (from αἶνος/*ainos*), Lausus' in Latin (from *laus*). As Stover points out with reference to Du Quesnay 1977, *ainos*, accented differently, turns into αἰνός/*ainos* 'dread, terrible', an aspect of Aeneas' character that comes fully into its own at the very end when he is [12.946–7]*īrā | terribilis* 'terrible in his wrath', in killing Turnus, collapsing the two meanings in the paradox of 'praiseworthy in his terribleness'.

> But when Anchises' son saw the look on that dying face – that face so strangely pale – he groaned heavily in pity, and stretched out his hand, as the likeness of his own love for his father entered his heart. 'What now, unhappy boy, will loyal Aeneas give you in recognition of these glorious deeds of yours?...'

He informs Lausus that (unlike what Turnus did to Pallas) he will not despoil him of his weapons and offers the reassurance that at least his killer is 'great Aeneas' (827–30: 'This at least, unhappy man, will console you for your sad death: you fall by the hand of great Aeneas'). In his ironclad commitment to filial *pietās*, Lausus not only mirrors Aeneas, but also re-enacts the choices of Pompey's sons and so many other Romans in times of civil strife. Virgil here enables his contemporary readers to relive some of the most salient conflicts and emotions in recent history and, if they are so inclined, re-litigate issues of (mistaken) loyalty and (personal) guilt, conflicting emotions and insoluble moral dilemmas. To what length should family loyalty go, especially if your father is a gruesome tyrant (though Virgil complicates the question by 're-humanising' Mezentius at the close)? Interpersonal bonds may well be at variance with the welfare of the civic community.[48]

The recognition that there is no moral compass that offers conclusive guidance through the ethical morass in situations in which one ends up killing the (othered) self may constitute the only possible way out of the paradox: recognizing it *as* a paradox potentially helps to demoralise impossible choices. Acknowledging that the killed enemy is at some level identical to oneself would seem to defeat the point of vilifying the vanquished: a policy of recognizing shared values constitutes a possible alternative to persistent othering and criminalization and opens a possible path to sympathy and reintegration after violent rupture. Conversely, sympathy for the vanquished might also imply understanding (if not sympathy) for the victor. Implacable enmity gets thereby reframed as shared tragedy, obviating the need for further feuds and murderous vendettas.[49]

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48 Cicero explores the same issue with reference to friendship in his *Laelius dē Amīcitiā*: what takes precedence, personal friendship (to someone like Caesar) or regard for the commonwealth?

49 There is a similar logic in play if one reads the second half of the *Aeneid* as re-

4.3 *pius* Aeneas – down to the bitter end?

19/38 instances of *pius* come attached to Aeneas and 12/22 instances of *pietās* are linked to representatives of the family of Anchises (9 specifically to Aeneas). He self-identifies as *pius* (1.378, 10.826), and other characters, both human and divine, as well as the poet recognize *pietās* as his most distinctive quality (1.10: poet; 1.253: Venus; 1.544–5: Ilioneus; 3.480: Helenus; 6.403: Sibyl; 6.688: Anchises; 11.292: Diomedes). The association is thus pervasive but never random. The generic quality manifests itself in specific ways, across the full range of possibilities and often in strikingly innovative ways. For instance, when Ilioneus advertises Aeneas' *pietās* to Dido, he characterises his leader as 'a man steadfast in the duty of observing his obligations and of making returns on services received' in the context of international diplomacy, the first such use of the term on record. (Roman trustworthiness in foreign affairs is conventionally expressed in the idiom of *fidēs*; whether we are in this instance dealing with a case of false advertising – as Dido will come to assert, calling Aeneas both *perfidus* and *impius* – is only one of the *pietās*-paradoxes Virgil invites his readers to ponder.[50])

In the first half dutiful devotion towards the gods and towards his father takes centre-stage, culminating in his descent into the underworld. And after losing the plot for a while in Carthage, he also (re-)activates *pietās* towards his (future) *patria*, helped along by divine and paternal interventions (4.333–61, with commentary). But in pursuit of *pietās* towards gods, kin, and country, he ends up as *impius* towards Dido, at least from Dido's point of view (4.496). And she answers his perceived religious outrage with an outrageous religious response. All three variants of dutiful devotion (to gods, country, and kin) continue to register in the second half, but with Turnus' killing of Pallas in Book 10, a special variant of kinship *pietās* comes to the fore:

enacting the Social War of 91–87 BCE between the Romans and their Italic allies. See Pogorzelski 2009: 263: 'Fratricidal war in the *Aeneid* is reassuring for Romans because it naturalizes Italian unity, because it obscures the conquest of Italy, and because the deaths of heroes on both sides of the war become keystones for Roman collective identification.'

50 See further Chapter 6: Gibson.

the obligation to avenge Pallas' death. Mourning over the corpse of his son, Evander makes it clear that Aeneas only deserves his epithet if he exacts lethal retribution (11.152–81; he calls Aeneas *pius* at 170 before insisting on the death penalty for Turnus).[51] In both halves of the *Aeneid*, then, darker aspects of the quality also at the interpersonal level are very much in evidence and continue to resonate right down to the very end.

Servius and others have read the ending as Virgil engineering a conflict between two mutually exclusive demands of *pietās*: towards Evander and his son Pallas; towards Anchises and his dictum to spare the conquered. Aeneas resolves the Catch–22 in a fit of violence, externalising his agency and (in vain) trying to exculpate himself by giving it a religious veneer.[52] At some level this is clearly right. Yet despite the fact that the final foundational moment of the epic consists in a homicide informed by *pietās* as well as *furor*, thus evoking the coincidence of *pietās* and *furor* of the civil war period, Virgil chooses not to mark it terminologically as such. Arguably, he has Aeneas lose the epithet, just as he did in Carthage. In *Aeneid* 12, he only attracts the label *pius* twice: in 175, just before a vow in matters of high diplomacy (commitment to a truce and a prospective duel with Turnus to settle the hostilities); and in 311, when he learns that the treaty has been broken. Put differently, the last two times Aeneas is *pius* he is shown enacting *pietās ergā deōs patriamque*, i.e. the variants the senators put on the shield of virtue. Having rehearsed the problematics of *pietās*-loyalties in civil war in Aeneas' confrontation with Lausus, Virgil has made room for an intriguing lexical void at the end. The final show-down with Turnus Aeneas undertakes without his standing epithet, even though he ends up enacting the vindictive kinship *pietās* demanded by Evander. This variant of *pietās*, it seems, no longer dares to speak its name: it has come under erasure, both on the senatorial shield and in Virgil's *Aeneid* as a (nevertheless ineluctable) absent presence of the past.[53]

51 For an analysis of his speech, which overshadows the final two books see Gildenhard and Henderson 2018: 343–54.

52 For a perceptive, step-by-step reading of the final scene see Tarrant 2012: 17–24.

53 Augustus would follow suit in re-imagining the temple of Mars Vltor, vowed in

5. Conclusion

The *Aeneid*, then, constitutes a considered intervention in the ongoing re-negotiation of the religious and socio-political value (positive and negative) of *pietās*. Virgil turns it into a central category of his literary world-making, promoting the religious dimension of this quality, always present via the etymology, in the sense of 'dutiful worship of the gods' (and at times appealed to as guardians of justice, despite their checkered record in this respect). He validates an aspect rather marginal or even deliberately sidelined in Rome's civic religion and further innovates in the way he insistently projects the quality onto the gods.

At times, he gives *pietās* the sense of 'sympathy' or 'compassion' (both human and divine) but fully recognises the potential of interpersonal *pietās* at the human plane to fuel *furor* and at some level become indistinguishable from it. Rather than resolve this paradox, he embeds interpersonal *pietās* within a wider cosmic frame, where it becomes a quality of order (in opposition to chaos), represented, despite lapses, by Jupiter and the various representatives of the *gēns Iūlia*: from Anchises to Aeneas, from Iulus down to Augustus and Marcellus. Virgil's theological creativity finds a counterpart (and stands in dynamic dialogue with) the religious policies of the Augustan regime that re-centred religion in the *princeps* and involved the autocratic co-option of such republican institutions as the collection of Sibylline oracles, control of the calendar, or organisation of the Secular Games – as well as the association of the *princeps* with personified/deified values. As Alison Cooley notes:[54]

42 BCE before the battle of Philippi against Caesar's assassins, as celebrating his (diplomatic) triumph over the Parthians when it was finally dedicated in 2 BCE.

54 Cooley 2006: 247 (my italics). For 'the figure of the emperor as a point of religious convergence' more generally, eventually also via cult, see further Rives 2019: 524: 'What we conventionally call "imperial cult" was in fact a vast and varied array of strategies for *endowing the emperor with a distinctive and privileged connection to the divine sphere* that encompassed not only cult activities but also iconography, titulature, and a range of other cultural practices' (my italics).

> The creation of 'august(an)' gods, then, was a conscious innovation of the times, which served to foster loyalty towards Augustus and his family, by implying a close link between the activities of a deity and the person of the emperor. Virtues initially set the pattern, with the emergence of deities such as Pax Augusta ('August(an) Peace') and Justitia Augusta ('August(an) Justice'). *This reflects the way in which Augustus himself, and gradually the imperial family as a whole, came to monopolize certain qualities, which they then transmitted to the rest of Roman society.*

The *pietās ergā deōs* of the proto-*princeps* Aeneas already proves situationally effective in the narrative; and its equivalent in Virgil's Augustan present constitutes the most promising factor in securing good relations with the divine sphere going forward – or so at least the senators felt who put this variant of *pietās* on their shield of virtue.

At the end of the *Aeneid*, does *pietās* (still) mean the duty to perpetrate acts of retributive homicide? Arguably yes, but it is a sense that Virgil seemingly wishes to retire without denying the significant role it has played in (recent) Roman history. The elimination of the last rival opens the road to peace, especially if the autocrat is willing to practice *pietās ergā deōs patriamque*. And in its salvific variant *pietās* is a potential counter to *Furor* (*impius*), a contrast Virgil explicitly draws in his first programmatic simile. Thus when the epic ends, Roman history can begin (and, as far as the *Aeneid* is concerned, end in Virgil's here and now) as a drawn-out re-enactment of everything aetiologically prefigured in the poem. Its hero is implicated in both Rome's civil-war history and prefigures a future in which the problematics of republican *pietās* as a para-civic virtue get re-negotiated (if not resolved) in a new autocratic normal.

Appendix: *pius*, *pietās*, and *impius* in the *Aeneid*

	pius	***pietās***	***impius***
1	[220]*pius Aenēās* (mourning his lost comrades) [305]*pius Aenēās* (care-ridden throughout the night setting out to explore) [378]*sum pius Aenēās* (self-identifying to his mother in disguise) [526]*parce piō generī* 'spare a pious race' (Ilioneus to Dido) [603]*sī qua piōs respectant nūmina* 'if any divine powers have regard for the pious' (Aeneas in gratitude to Dido)	[10]*īnsignem pietāte uirum* 'a man outstanding in dutiful devotion' (Aeneas) [150–1]*furor* v. *pietās* (simile) [253]*hic pietātis honōs* (Venus to Jupiter) [544–5]*quō iūstior alter* | *nec pietāte fuit* 'none more just or dutiful than he' (Ilioneus about Aeneas)	[294–5]*Furor impius intus* | ... *sedēns* 'impious Rage sitting within' [348–9] *ille ...* | *impius* (Pygmalion)
2		[429–30]*tua plūrima ...*|*... pietās* (of Panthus) 'all your goodness' [536]*dī, sīqua est caelō pietās* 'if in heaven there is any righteousness' (Priam speaking) [690]*sī pietāte merēmur* 'if our goodness earn it' (Anchises to Jupiter)	[163–4]*impius ...* | *Tȳdīdēs*
3	[42]*parce piās scelerāre manūs* 'spare the pollution of your pure hands' (Polydorus to Aeneas) [75]*pius arquitenēns* 'the grateful archer god' (Apollo) [266]*seruāte piōs* 'save the guiltless' (Anchises in prayer)	[480]*ō fēlīx nātī pietāte* 'blest in your son's love' (Helenus to Anchises)	
4	[382]*sī quid pia nūmina possunt* 'if (the) righteous gods have any power'(Dido) [393]*pius Aenēās* [[464]*uātum praedicta p(r)iōrum* 'saying of pious seers/ seers of old'; cf. 6.662] [517]*manibus ... piīs* 'with holy hands' (of Dido) [637]*piā tege tempora uittā* 'veil your brows with a pure chaplet' (Dido to nurse)		[298]*impia Fāma* [496]*impius* (Dido about Aeneas) [596]*nunc tē facta impia tangunt?* 'do only know the sinful deeds come home to you?' (Dido about Aeneas' and/ or her own deeds)

	pius	***pietās***	***impius***
5	[26]*pius Aenēās* [286]*pius Aenēās* [296]*Nīsus* [*īnsignis*] *amōre piō puerī* 'Nisus famed for loyal love for the boy'' [418]*piō ... Aenēae* (Entellus speaking) [685]*pius Aenēās* [734–5]*amoena piōrum concilia* 'the sweet assemblies of the blessed' (Anchises about his underworld abode) [745]*farre piō* 'with holy meal'	[688]*pietās antīqua* 'your loving kindness of old' (of Jupiter) [783]*quam ... pietās nec mītigat ūlla* 'whom no goodness softens' (Venus to Neptune about Juno)	[733](*nōn*) *impia Tartara*; (Anchises about his underworld abode)
6	[9]*pius Aenēās* [176]*pius Aenēās* [232]*pius Aenēās* [530]*piō sī poenās ōre reposcō* 'if with pious lips I pray for vengeance' (Deiphobus) [662]*piī uātēs* 'pure, good bards'	[403]*Trōius Aenēās, pietāte īnsignis et armīs* 'Trojan Aeneas, famous for piety and arms' & [405]*tantae pietātis imāgō* 'the picture of such piety' (Sibyl to Charon) [687–8]*tua ... exspectāta parentī | uīcit iter dūrum pietās?* 'has the duty that your father expected vanquished the toilsome way?' (Anchises to Aeneas) [769]*Siluius Aenēās, pariter pietāte uel armīs | ēgregius* 'Aeneas Silvius, no less eminent in goodness and in arms' [878]*heu pietās* (Anchises about Marcellus)	[543]*impia Tartara* [612–13]*... quīque arma secūtī | impia ...* 'who followed the standard of treason'
7	[5]*pius ... Aenēās* [21]*piī ... Trōēs* 'the pious of Troy' [401–2]*sīqua piīs animīs manet īnfēlīcis Amātae | grātia* 'if in your loyal hearts still lives affection for unhappy Amata' (Amata addressing the mothers of Latium)		
8	[84]*pius Aenēās* [670]*sēcrētōs ... piōs* 'far apart, the good' (underworld topography on shield)		

	pius	***pietās***	***impius***
9	[255]*pius Aenēās*	[294]*patriae ... pietātis imāgō* 'the picture of filial/paternal love' (Ascanius being struck by Euryalus' *pietās* towards his mother or Aeneas' towards him – or both) [493] *fīgite mē, sīqua est pietās* 'Pierce me, if you have any feeling' (Euryalus' mother in an imaginary address to the Rutulians)	
10	[591]pius *Aenēās* [617] *Teucrīs ... piō det sanguine poenās* 'let him with innocent blood make atonement to the Trojans!' (Juno about Turnus) [783]*pius Aenēās* [826]*pius Aenēās* (self-referential, to Lausus)	[812]*fallit tē incautum pietās tua* 'your love is betraying you into rashness' (Aeneas to Lausus) [824]*patriae ... pietātis imāgō* 'the likeness of his own love for his father' (the image of Anchises occurring to Aeneas at the sight of dying Lausus)	
11	[170] *pius Aenēās* (Evander, insisting on vindictive *pietās*)	[292]*hic pietāte prior* 'he was first in loyalty' (Diomedes comparing Aeneas to Hector) [787]*frētī pietāte* 'in strength of faith' (Arruns in a prayer to Apollo about worshipping the god)	
12	[175]*pius Aenēās* [311]*pius Aenēās*	[838–40]*genus ... | suprā hominēs, suprā īre deōs pietāte uidēbis, | nec gēns ūlla tuōs aequē celebrābit honōrēs* 'you will see a race ... overpass men, overpass gods in loyalty and no nation will celebrate your worship with equal zeal' (Jupiter to Juno about the *gēns Rōmāna*)	[31]*arma impia sūmpsī* 'I drew the unholy sword' (Latinus)

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CRITICAL APPROACHES

Ante Lib. I
DIDO
ENEAS
Æolus immittit ventos Junonis ob iram ;
Troianas q suis flatibus exagitat .
Sed matris curâ Lybicas Tros fertur in oras
Excipitur q piæ principis hospitio .

Fig. 22: Crispijn van de Passe (I) (1612). Dido welcomes Aeneas. *Speculum Aeneidis Virgilianae* 'Mirror of Virgil's Aeneid'. Rijksmuseum. Object Number: RP-P-OB-16.017. Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200384377

Aeolus immittit ventōs Iūnōnis ob īram; *Sed mātris cūrā Lybicās Trōs fertur in ōrās*
Trōiānāsque suīs flātibus exagitat. *Excipiturque piae principis hospitiō*

[Aeolus unleashes the winds on account of Juno's wrath and harasses the Trojan (ships) with his blasts. But through his mother's care the Trojan (= Aeneas) is carried to Libyan shores and is welcomed with the hospitality of the righteous queen.]

Chapter 6: Aeneas as *Hospes* in Vergil, *Aeneid* 1 and 4

Roy K. Gibson

In the opening section of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* 3 the poet, in an attempt to gain favour with his female addressees, lists a number of legends where it is men who are the deceivers. In this list he includes Aeneas, *et famam pietatis habet, tamen hospes et ensem / praebuit et causam mortis, Elissa, tuae* 'Famed too is he for piety, yet your guest, Elissa, gave you both a sword and the cause of your destruction' (39–40). The terms in which Aeneas' guilt is cast are striking. Aeneas is criticized not for his lover's faithlessness, but for his shattering of the rules of *hospitium* ('guest-friendship'). At the heart of *hospitium*, in as much as it is friendship between strangers,[1] lay the ideals of duty, loyalty, reciprocity, and the exchange of services. *pietas* (39) includes, in this context, a reference to the guest's sense of, or actual fulfilment of, the duty to pay a proper return on the hospitality received.[2] Aeneas had a reputation for doing his duty as a *hospes* ('guest'), i.e. as someone who was conscientious about his duty to make an appropriate return. But, according to Ovid, the return which he actually made was diametrically opposed

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1 See D. Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 36.

2 R. C. Monti, *The Dido Episode and the Aeneid*, *Mnemosyne Supplement* 66 (Leiden 1981), pp. 11–12.

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to a proper return, and consisted of a sword and a reason for Dido to kill herself with it. Ovid's decision to frame Aeneas' guilt in terms of *hospitium* reflects an emphasis adopted both in his own earlier epistle from Dido to Aeneas (*Heroides* 7), and (what will concern us more) in the *Aeneid* itself. The erotic relationship between Dido and Aeneas in Book 4 of the *Aeneid* evolves out of the *hospitium* relationship established between them in Book I. When Aeneas leaves Dido he asserts that their relationship is that of host and guest rather than of husband and wife, and that he has acted and will act well in this *hospitium* relationship (*Aen*. 4.334–9). Dido, for her part, even after she has been forced to drop the argument that she and Aeneas are married (*Aen*. 4.431), continues to attack Aeneas and the Trojans as bad or faithless *hospites* (*Aen*. 4.538–41, 4.596–8), and ends by renouncing *hospitium* with them (*Aen*. 4.622–9).

The couplet quoted from *Ars* 3 above settles this exchange over the rights and duties of *hospitium* firmly in favour of Dido: Aeneas failed in his solemn duty to provide Dido with a proper return. In settling the matter thus Ovid is responding, however provocatively, to an invitation in the text of the *Aeneid*. Aeneas and Dido make claims and counter-claims about the nature of their relationship and their behaviour within it, based on their conception of proper conduct within *hospitium*. The matter is never settled by an explicit editorial comment from the narrator. Vergil thus sets a problem for the reader of the *Aeneid*: how have Aeneas and Dido acted in the light of the values of *hospitium* to which they both appeal?[3] It is this question which the present paper will try to answer. Any answer to the question of behaviour within *hospitium* will carry important implications for the moral character and moral **[185]** reputation of the two individuals. Nor would the issue have been without resonance for contemporary readers. Questions of reciprocity were the stuff of Roman social intercourse (not to mention the emotions). In particular, the propaganda war between Octavian and Antony-Cleopatra which preceded Actium revolved around assertions of broken personal and political bonds, and accusations of indebtedness and ingratitude.[4]

Hospitium in the Dido and Aeneas episode has, to my knowledge, been the subject of detailed investigation once before, in Monti's 1981

3 However, Vergil does issue an editorial comment on the relationship of 'marriage' which evolves out of their *hospitium* relationship, at 4.171–2 *nec iam furtivum Dido meditatur amorem:/ coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam*.

4 Cf. e.g. Plut. *Ant*. 53–5.

book *The Dido Episode and the Aeneid*. Monti kept his focus deliberately on Roman sources. In this paper I wish to complicate the picture by invoking Homer.[5] The reception of guest by host is perhaps the most common type scene of all in the *Odyssey*, and the proper conduct of host and guest or *ξένοι* an important and complex issue for the characters in the poem.[6] These repeated *ξενία*-type scenes, often recalled by Vergil, provide a respected source of comments on actions done in the name of guest-friendship, and offer another framework within which to view the relationship of Dido and Aeneas.[7] With this material I hope to bring out the tension, hitherto unacknowledged, that exists between Aeneas and Dido in the first book of the *Aeneid*. This tension will be seen to revolve around the issues of relative status, reciprocity, and the state of being dependent on another. Tension erupts into hostility over the very same issues in the fourth book—in addition to the new hostility and tension generated by the issue of 'marriage'. (We shall, however, deliberately neglect the issue of marriage.) An organic connection between the two parts of the narrative is thus provided. Furthermore I want to investigate whether we can answer the questions which Vergil sets the reader about the behaviour of Dido and Aeneas to one another as host and guest. Here I will focus on the nature of the claims made by the two characters.

Hospitality Scenes in Homer and the *Aeneid*

In his recent work on hospitality scenes in Homer, *The Stranger's Welcome*, Reece identifies eighteen major examples in the 'Homeric' corpus:

5 Although my emphases and conclusions differ from those of Monti, my debt to his work is obvious.

6 Of course guest-friendship is an issue outside the *Odyssey* too, and is often seized upon by abandoned women as a way of publicly expressing their sense of betrayal, for example by Medea and Ariadne; see further S. Farron, *Vergil's Aeneid: a Poem of Grief and Love*, *Mnemosyne Supplement* 122 (Leiden 1993), pp. 97–9. Cf. also the only surviving fragment of Callimachus' treatment of the myth of Phyllis and Demophoon, fr. 556 Pfeiffer *νυμφίε Δημοφόων, ἄδικε ξένε* (compare Ov. *Epist*. 2.1). For the latter myth, see especially F. della Corte, '*Perfidus hospes*', in *Hommages à Marcel Renard* (*Collections Latomus* 101, 1969) 1.312–21 = *Opuscula* IV (Genova, 1973), pp. 29–38.

7 The obvious danger here is that Vergil's scenes and characters have so many Homeric and other forebears and parallels as to threaten to frustrate the possibility of coherent reading; see R. Hexter, 'Sidonian Dido', in R. Hexter and D. Selden (edd.), *Innovations of Antiquity* (London, 1993), pp. 332–84, at pp. 338–42.

twelve in the *Odyssey*;[8] four in the *Iliad*;[9] and two in the *Hymns*.[10] In the *Aeneid* Vergil includes five major **[186]** hospitality scenes: Dido and the Trojans; Aeneas and Helenus in Epirus; Aeneas and Acestes in Sicily; Latinus and the Trojans; Aeneas and Evander. To this may be added a number of minor episodes, such as Anchises and Anius on Delos and the Trojans and Achaemenides.[11]

The Homeric scenes include a number of repeated conventional elements, such as arrival at the destination, description of the surroundings, the offer of a seat to the guest by the host, a feast, identification of the guest, exchange of information, entertainment, offer of a bed, the detainment of the guest by the host, and finally bestowal of gifts by the host and departure of the guest. The Homeric poems gain much internal complexity from the repetition, variation and omission of these elements in individual hospitality scenes. The ancient commentators were apparently aware of this phenomenon. The scholia to, for example, *Od*. 4.69, in commenting on the complexity of the process of the identification of Telemachus in the Spartan episode, contrast the 'novel' (*καινός*) pattern in Sparta with the 'common' (*κοινός*) pattern of identification, as in the episode at Pylos. As a student of both the Homeric poems and their commentators,[12] Vergil will have been aware of the status of the hospitality episode in Homer as a type scene with conventional elements. As we shall see, his *Aeneid*, particularly in the Dido episode, gains complexity and a rich framework for judgement from the repetition, variation, and omission of the conventional elements which go to make up the Homeric hospitality scene. Nevertheless, it ought to be said in advance that the Homeric material should not blind us to the fact that there is something profoundly disturbing about the very existence of a *hospitium* relationship between Aeneas and Dido. The future enmity of Rome and Carthage, the Roman conception of *Punica*

8 Athene-Mentes in Ithaca; Telemachus in Pylos; Telemachus in Sparta; Hermes and Calypso; Odysseus and the Phaeacians; Odysseus and Polyphemus; Odysseus and Aeolus; Odysseus and the Laestrygonians; Odysseus and Circe; Odysseus and Eumaeus; Telemachus and Eumaeus; and Odysseus' homecoming.

9 The embassy to Achilles; Nestor and Odysseus in Phthia; Thetis and Hephaestus; and Priam and Achilles.

10 Demeter in the home of Celeos, and Aphrodite and Anchises.

11 For a brief review of the major hospitality episodes in the *Aeneid*, see S. F. Wiltshire, *Public and Private in Vergil's Aeneid* (Amherst, 1989), pp. 83–105.

12 See e.g. R. R. Schlunk, *The Homeric Scholia and the Aeneid* (Ann Arbor, 1974).

fides,[13] and the historic enmity between Aeneas' mother and Dido's father, Venus and Belus (l.621f.),[14] all give grounds for disquiet here. The whole question of *hospitium* between Carthaginian and Trojan is in fact pushed forward as an issue at 1.297–300 when Jupiter sends his messenger to earth, *haec ait et Maia genitum demittit ab alto, / ut terrae utque novae pateant Karthaginis arces / hospitio Teucris, ne fati nescia Dido / finibus arceret* 'So speaking, he sends the son of Maia down from heaven, that the land and towers of new-built Carthage may open to greet the Teucrians, and Dido, ignorant of fate, might not bar them from her lands'. It is only as a result of Mercury's intervention that Dido and the Carthaginians put aside their instinctive *ferocia corda* 'savage hearts' (1.302–3) and adopt a *mentem benignam* 'kind disposition' (1.304).[15]

The Arrival of the Trojans in Africa

The initial stages of the Trojans' reception in Carthage include many of the conventional elements of Homeric reception scenes. Aeneas meets a woman who shows him the way to Dido's palace (*Aen*. 1.314ff.), just as Odysseus meets young women who show him the way to the palaces of Alcinous and the Laestrygonian king (*Od*. 6.110–32, 7.18–81, 10.103–11; cf. 15.415–84). Aeneas' journey later includes other conventional elements, such as description of the surroundings and the **[187]** awe of the viewer (1.421f., 1.455f., 1.494), description of the activities of the person sought (1.496–508), and the waiting of the visitor at the threshold (1.453f.).

Dido finally appears, but she cannot suddenly notice the visitor and approach him to offer hospitality (in contrast to a common pattern in Homer), as Aeneas is concealed from human sight in a cloud, from which he does not emerge. Instead it is Ilioneus who, as leader of the surviving Trojans, is the first to engage with Dido as host. Aeneas and Achates meanwhile stay concealed in their cloud (1.516f. *dissimulant et nube cava speculantur amicti / quae fortuna viris*). In the scene which

13 See N. Horsfall, *PVS* 13 (1973-4), 4–6.

14 See J. Foster, *PVS* 13 (1973-4), 29–30.

15 See Horsfall (n. 13), p. 4 and cf. Venus' references to her fear of *lunonia hospitia* (1.671–2). The uncertainty which Vergil manages to create here about the Carthaginians as hosts may be compared to the doubt cast in the *Odyssey* on just how willing the Phaeacians will turn out to be to help Odysseus (for which see G. Most, 'The structure and function of Odysseus' *apologoi*', *TAPA* 119 [1989], 15–30, at 27).

follows they see Dido acting as a generous host towards the Trojans (1.562–78). That Aeneas is, through this device of concealment in a cloud, being allowed to watch on in judgement of Dido, is a suggestion to which we shall later return.

The Speech of Ilioneus: 1.522–58

In three scenes in Homer, the visitor is so vulnerable (or resourceless) that he is forced to approach his host not as guest but as suppliant.[16] This is the situation in which Ilioneus, as representative of the surviving Trojans, finds himself. He avoids the traditional Homeric and Greek custom of clasping the knees of his host. Nevertheless the position of the Trojans is that of suppliants (1.518f. *cuncti nam lecti navibus ibant / orantes veniam*) and the language which Ilioneus uses is that of supplication (1.524f. *Troes te miseri ... / oramus*; 526 *parce pio generi et propius res aspice nostras*). The speech which Ilioneus makes as suppliant to Dido may be divided into three sections. Each is designed to put pressure on Dido with regard to the conventions of *hospitium* in a different way.

(i) Ilioneus straightaway provides information which a guest, according to Homeric convention, might reasonably delay providing until his material needs had been catered for. Whereas a visitor can expect a good host to reserve questions about identity and business until after the host has offered him a seat and a place at table, Ilioneus feels constrained to volunteer such traditional information as his identity (1.524), business (1.525f.; cf. 1.551f.), an assurance that the Trojans are not pirates (1.527ff.), his destination (1.530ff.; cf. 1.553ff.) and transport (1.534ff.). This is a striking deviation from Homeric convention. It is of course appropriate to his suppliant status, but it is noticeable that even in his suppliant state Odysseus reveals nothing about himself to Arete, but merely requests his passage home (7.146ff.).[17] It is perhaps to be

16 Odysseus and Arete and Alcinous; Odysseus and Polyphemus; and Priam and Achilles.

17 But information is revealed by Odysseus to Nausicaa at 6. 170ff. It might be objected here that circumstances force Ilioneus to be more open. He has arrived as the spokesman of shiploads of warriors, whereas the arrival of, for example, the unaccompanied Odysseus is considerably less threatening, and so requires less explanation. Note, however, the 'Homeric' reception given to Jason and his men at Colchis, at Ap. *Arg*. 3.299ff.

viewed as a deliberate attempt to secure in advance a reciprocal gesture of goodwill from Dido. So far the Carthaginians have proved hostile to the Trojans.[18] Ilioneus must accordingly attempt to claim the goodwill of the Carthaginians – here by the voluntary breaking of convention.

(ii) Ilioneus then makes a further attempt to shame the hostile Carthaginians into receiving the Trojans peaceably. His words in this first meeting between Carthaginian **[188]** and (future) Roman are of ill omen for their future relations: *quod genus hoc hominum? quaeve hunc tam barbara morem / permittit patria? hospitio prohibemur harenae*; / *bella cient primaque vetant consistere terra*. / *si genus humanum et mortalia temnitis arma*, / *at sperate deos memores fandi atque nefandi* 'What race of men is this? What land is so barbarous as to allow this custom? We are debarred the welcome of the beach; they stir up wars and forbid us to set foot on the border of their land. If you think light of human kinship and mortal arms, yet look unto gods who will remember right and wrong' (1.539–43). Ilioneus and the Trojans could not as of right expect to be welcomed as guest-friends. There was an expectation that strangers be welcomed hospitably, but the courtesy was not obligatory.[19] Hence Ilioneus, as we have already seen, adopts the position of suppliant, and furthermore now focuses his complaint on the Carthaginians' denial of what he asserts is their basic right, namely *hospitium harenae* or the right to come ashore.[20] The complaint is one intended to shame Dido. Two incidents in the *Odyssey* are illuminating here. In *Od*. 4, Telemachus and Pisistratus arrive in Sparta and a herald approaches Menelaus with the question whether they should be offered hospitality. Menelaus is properly horrified at this delay in receiving the visitors and vigorously upbraids his herald before commanding that the visitors be brought in immediately (4.31ff). Similarly in Scheria the Phaeacian elder Echeneus upbraids Alcinous and Arete with their stunned surprise at the appearance of Odysseus, and failure to respond immediately to his suppliant's plea (7.159ff). Good hosts, according to the paradigm of the

18 The victory scenes· on Juno's temple, which depict Trojan suffering, also signal potential hostility. The interpretation of this episode is, however, controversial. For other views, see most recently S. Lowenstan, 'The pictures on Juno's temple in the *Aeneid*', *CW* 87 (1993), 37–49, at 48–9, also Hexter (n. 7), pp. 353–7.

19 Konstan (n. 1), p. 36.

20 Ilioneus is no doubt depending on Dido accepting the viewpoint reported by D. Servius, *litus enim iure gentium commune omnibus fuit*.

Odyssey, do not fail to offer hospitality or to respond to a suppliant's plea. But in Carthage the suppliant Trojans may not even come ashore.

The pressure which Ilioneus' speech applies is appropriate in view of both the explicit and implicit signals of the Carthaginians' hostility. Dido responds graciously, but under the circumstances someone who wished to appear as a good host might have little choice. Nevertheless, as in Sparta and Scheria, there are extenuating circumstances for the initial hesitation in the extending of hospitality. As the scholiast to *Od*. 4.26 points out, Telemachus arrives during the exceptional circumstances of a wedding celebration, and the Spartans had suffered grievously at the hands of a previous guest, Paris. As for the Phaeacians, they were destined to be punished for their custom of escorting strangers home (13.170–83). Similarly, the circumstances of the flight from Sidon and the founding of the new city oblige Dido to be careful: *res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt / moliri et late finis custode tueri* 'Stern necessity and the new estate of my kingdom force me to do such hard deeds and protect my frontiers far and wide with guards' (*Aen*. 1.563f.).

(iii) Finally Ilioneus mentions Aeneas (1.544–52):

> rex erat Aeneas nobis, quo iustior alter
> nec pietate fuit, nec bello maior et armis.
> quem si fata virum servant, si vescitur aura
> aetheria neque adhuc crudelibus occubat umbris,
> non metus, officio nec te certasse priorem
> paeniteat. sunt et Siculis regionibus urbes
> armaque Troianoque a sanguine clarus Acestes.
> quassatam ventis liceat subducere classem
> et silvis aptare trabes et stringere remos ...
>
> A king we had, Aeneas: none more just or dutiful than he, or more renowned in war and arms. If fate still preserves that hero, if he feeds on the air of heaven and lies not yet in the cruel shades, we have no fear, nor would you regret to have taken the first step in the strife of courtesy. In Sicilian regions, too, there are cities and a supply of arms, and a prince of Trojan blood, famed Acestes. Grant us to beach our storm-battered fleet, to fashion planks in the forests and trim oars ...

In this speech there is the implied threat of an armed response to the Carthaginians (545; cf. 542; 549f.).[21] More relevant to our theme, however, is the attempt Ilioneus makes here to have the Trojans raised from the status of suppliant to the status of **[189]** guest-friends. Suppliants are often resourceless, and so are ill-prepared to enter into the exchange of services which is characteristic of guest-host relationships. But Ilioneus now makes it clear that the Trojans are equipped to enter into such an exchange relationship. As we saw above, a guest is not properly asked to reveal his name until after he has been given a seat and a place at his host's table. The revelation by the guest of his name and other relevant information then acts as a kind of counter-gift for the host's hospitality, as for example in the case of Odysseus on Scheria. The guest's revelation of his name also allows the host the possibility of claiming reciprocal hospitality from the guest at some point in the future. Here Ilioneus volunteers not his own name but (a more powerful card) that of his king. This is a guarantee, in advance of any hospitality received, of reciprocal favours should Dido receive the Trojans as *hospites* on African soil. This implicit guarantee is backed by more explicit promises of reciprocity. Aeneas has no equal for his *pietas* (545). That is to say, Aeneas is a man steadfast in the duty of observing his obligations and of making returns on services received.[22] Also, the Carthaginians would not regret taking the lead in a contest of *officia* (548). That is to say, if Dido were to perform the kind service (*officium*) of allowing the Trojans access to material assistance (1.551f.), she would be guaranteed a perhaps greater return on it from Aeneas her grateful guest.[23] Furthermore the Trojans have the resources to make a return on services received, as they have kin in nearby Sicily (1.549f.).[24] (Again there is an ominous note in this last remark.)

21 This threat is later validated rhetorically by Ilioneus through the implicit contrast between the *pius* and *iustus* race of the Trojans and their king (1.526, 543-4), and the Carthaginians with their *infandi ignes* (1.525).

22 Monti (n. 2), pp. 11–12.

23 For *officium* and its place in the vocabulary of reciprocity, see R. P. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 15–17. The striking use of this vocabulary in an epic poem such as the *Aeneid* will receive further comment below.

24 Ilioneus implies that the Trojans are worthy guests also because Aeneas is the equal, if not the superior of Dido in the matter of *iustitia* (contrast 4.523–4 and 544–5).

Dido's Reply to Ilioneus: 1.562–578

Dido explains to the Trojans the extenuating circumstances behind their ill-treatment at the hands of her people, and assures them that the fate of Troy and Aeneas' brave band of men is well known to the Carthaginians,[25] who are not barbarians on the world's edge, before adding (1.569–76): **[190]**

> seu vos Hesperiam magnam Saturniaque arva
> sive Erycis finis regemque optatis Acesten,
> auxilio tutos dimittam opibusque iuvabo.
> vultis et his mecum pariter considere regnis?
> urbem quam statuo, vestra est; subducite navis;
> Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur.
> atque utinam rex ipse Noto compulso eodem
> adforet Aeneas!
>
> Whether your choice be great Hesperia and the fields of Saturn, or the lands of Eryx and Acestes for your king, I will send you hence guarded by an escort, and aid you with my wealth. Or is it your wish to settle with me on even terms within these realms? The city I build is yours; draw up your ships; Trojan and Tyrian I shall treat alike. And would that your king were here, driven by the same wind – Aeneas himself!

Here Dido gives the first evidence to the Trojans of her friendly intentions, by responding to the request that the Trojans be raised from suppliant to guest-friend status. Ilioneus had merely asked that the Trojans be allowed access to material to refit their fleet (1.551f.). Dido, however, offers her more active assistance (1.571 *auxilio tutos dimittam opibusque iuvabo*) and even a place in her new city (1.572ff.). In the Homeric poems, Alcinous and Achilles demonstrate similar generosity by lifting their visitors from the status of suppliant to guest. They do this through raising the visitor by the hand and offering him a seat of honour (*Od.* 7.168f.; *Il.* 24.515, 24.522). Trojan suppliants, like Roman suppliants, do not prostrate themselves or accept actual seats. But Vergil demonstrates

25 However, Dido's knowledge of the Trojans, as reflected on the walls of the temple of Juno, may be read as disquieting.

his awareness of the Homeric convention that the offer of a seat signifies an elevation in status from suppliant to guest, by having Dido use the language of seating metaphorically (1.572 *vultis et his mecum pariter considere regnis?*).

Meanwhile, Aeneas has been standing by and observing Dido's treatment of the Trojans. Now it has been made clear that the Trojans are to be guests rather than suppliants, this is the appropriate moment for the kingly Aeneas to reveal himself and begin his *hospitium* relationship with his equal, queen Dido.[26] However, before we examine Aeneas's reply to Dido, we need to look in more detail at Dido's offers of help and assistance to the Trojans. The first, her offer of active material assistance, is relatively straightforward. This is the mark of a good host not only in the *Odyssey* but also in more prosaic discussions of the ethics of conferring *beneficia*. In his *de Beneficiis*, Seneca frequently uses the example of saving people from shipwreck, refitting their ships, and sending them on their way as a classic instance of a *beneficium* or 'kind service'.[27] The second offer, however, at first appears startling. For she holds out to the Trojans the possibility of partnership in Carthage: *vultis et his mecum pariter considere regnis?/ urbem quam statuo, vestra est; subducite navis;/ Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur* (1.572–4). Previous commentators have tended to stress the *humanitas* of this offer. However, acts of humanity need not always be straightforward in either their motivations or their implications. Certainly an offer of incorporation, made on a first encounter with a deeply offended foreign people, can hardly be accounted for by simple altruism. As Herman has shown, the start of Greek *ξενία* relationships are often characterized by spectacular acts of *εὐεργεσία*.[28] These acts are not only lavish demonstrations of non-hostility, but also often part of a deliberate strategy to place the recipient in such a state of indebtedness that he can only redeem himself by a display of submission and loyalty towards

26 Later, at the end of the relationship, Dido claims to be reduced herself to the level of suppliant, whether towards her former African suitors or the departing Trojans, at 4.534ff.

27 This relationship established by such active assistance is distinguished from the one that exists, for example, between innkeeper and guest. The latter is a commercial relationship and not *hospitium*, as money changes hands instead of *gratia* and *officia*. Cf. e.g. Sen. *Ben*. 1.5.4f., 1.14.1, 3.9.3, 3.35.4, 4.11.3, 4.37f.

28 G. Herman, *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 47ff., 122.

the donor. Can **[191]** something of this be detected in Dido's offer of an equal share in her kingdom? The vigorous and proud queen of Carthage (1.496–508) needs to recover her position with the offended Trojans. Dido's Carthaginian subjects did all they could to keep the Trojans from coming ashore, and this has placed her in an embarrassing and (as the Trojans muttered threats of an armed response suggest) potentially violent situation. In order to recover from this, some expansive gesture of non-hostility and acknowledgement of the good status of the visitors is needed. An offer of an equal place in her kingdom is, however, not only an expression of non-hostility and recognition of status. It is also so overly-generous in proportion to the situation that it may be thought to compensate the Trojans for their ill-treatment. And, in advance of any services received, it puts the Trojans firmly in her debt for making such a generous offer. It appears that they can now redeem themselves only by a display of submission. Dido thus skilfully recovers her position. She is transformed from barbarian (1.539f.) to commanding host.

The Reply of Aeneas to Dido: 1.595–610

Aeneas is now revealed, and steps forth from his cloud *os umerosque deo similis* 'godlike in face and shoulders' (1.589ff.). The pattern here resembles 'theoxenic' hospitality, whereby a disguised god or sometimes hero tests the hospitality of an individual. The pattern is a very common one in ancient literature, and in fact the first reception scene in the *Odyssey*, that of Athena-Mentes in Ithaca, is a form of theoxeny.[29] Aeneas, of course, does not test the hospitality of Dido personally, but theoxenic overtones can be detected in the fact that Aeneas is not revealed until after Dido has proved herself a receptive host, and that at the moment of his revelation he is compared to a god.[30] Vergil's choice of the theoxenic form has two complementary purposes. First of all it preserves Aeneas' kingly dignity. Odysseus may be forced to adopt the role of suppliant towards Arete, but Aeneas is allowed to observe while others supplicate. Secondly the theoxenic overtones implant in the text the notion of the

29 On theoxeny, see further A. S. Hollis, *Callimachus: Hecate* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 341–54.

30 A bath, from which the visitor often rises with enhanced appearance, is another standard element of Homeric reception scenes; see S. Reece, *The Stranger's Welcome* (Ann Arbor, 1993), pp. 33–4. Echoes of it can be detected here.

judgement of another's behaviour as *hospes*, for gods come to test and pass judgement on the hospitality of mortals.

Aeneas' revelation to human sight (presumably by his mother[31]) has also arguably come not a moment too soon. How might Ilioneus have responded to the startling offer of the queen of Carthage?[32] The kingly Aeneas enters to retrieve the position for the Trojans (1.595ff.). He makes no direct reply to Dido's offer of a place for them in her kingdom. He only describes her offer (1.598–600), and adds a tactfully oblique hint that circumstances will find him moving on from Carthage (1.610 *quae me cumque vocant terrae*). This is neither clear acceptance nor firm rejection of her offer. This shows that Aeneas understands the nature of Dido's offer: it is a demonstration of non-hostility (albeit one which has the potential to undermine the hero's mission). The obvious model for the making of such a socially significant offer is found in the *Odyssey*. In the seventh book Alcinous wishes that he could grant Odysseus a place in his kingdom—this time as his son-in-law. This offer again is designed to compensate **[192]** Odysseus for the ill-treatment he suffered in making his way to Alcinous' palace alone, and to acknowledge his status as a hero. Again Odysseus displays his understanding of the fundamentally symbolic nature of the offer by omitting to reply directly to it. But perhaps Aeneas and Odysseus make no direct reply also because they understand that such extravagant offers threaten to reduce recipients to a state of submissive dependence on the donor. In the *Aeneid*, Ilioneus arguably may not have the status or necessary authority to avoid this fate. The effect of Dido's offer is achieved partly by the implication of its content. Dido (like Alcinous) is offering her addressees a subordinate place in her kingdom. Trojans may be treated equally with Carthaginians, but both will owe obedience to their ruler, Dido.[33] Similarly Odysseus may enter Alcinous' kingdom as son-in-law, but he will now take his identity from his wife's family and owe

31 1.585ff. (Achates) '. . . *dictis respondent cetera matris*.' / *vix ea fatus erat cum circumfusa repente* / *scindit se nubes et in aethera purgat apertum*.

32 Cf. 7.212ff. (Ilioneus in the embassy to Latinus); 9.501 (Ilioneus' high position in the camp during the absence of Aeneas).

33 Despite the apparent egalitarianism of 1.572 *mecum pariter*, this is the implication of 1.574 *Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur*. I am conscious of a debt in my discussion to S. Murnaghan, *Disguise and Recognition in the Odyssey* (Princeton, 1987), pp. 91–103.

allegiance to Alcinous as his king. Accordingly Aeneas will have to use the utmost tact in replying to an offer which (ultimately) holds out to the Trojans the status of subordinates.[34]

Aeneas manages to preserve the status of the Trojans here by omitting to reply directly to Dido's offer (as we have already seen), by espousing the correct sentiments of gratitude, and by framing the whole in extravagant terms designed to match the extravagance of Dido's offer. First of all, Aeneas voluntarily identifies himself (1.595f.). This acts to demonstrate his own willingness to return the hospitality of his host.[35] He then hails Dido as the only woman to take pity on the Trojans (1.597) – an expression of gratitude which is strengthened for the reader by the implicit contrast with Aeneas' accusation of his mother at 1.407ff. Aeneas subsequently acknowledges that Dido's offer obliges him to show gratitude, but that he cannot make a proper return (1.600f.). Hence he appeals to the gods to recompense Dido properly (1.603ff.).[36] The only requital which Aeneas himself can offer is the manifestation of his gratitude in words (1.609f.).[37] He cannot make any worthy material return, but he can promise to publicize Dido's *beneficia*, as the properly grateful recipient was often said to be obliged to do.[38] To these expressions of gratitude are added a series of extravagant sentiments and compliments. The whole Trojan race could not repay Dido (1.601f.). It is hoped that the gods have a regard for goodness, justice, and have a sense of right (1.603–5). The happy age which brought Dido to life, and her parents are acclaimed (1.605f.). Aeneas ends with the high-flown

34 For the reader who knows Homer, it is also significant that such offers are characteristic of hosts who turn out to be obstructive. In the Spartan episode in the *Odyssey*, Menelaus' affectionate wish to resettle a returned Odysseus in the Peloponnese (in return for all the services performed by the latter for Menelaus) eventually turns into a desire to detain Telemachus for as long as possible in Sparta. Similarly the offer of Nausicaa's hand eventually becomes an obstacle to Odysseus' return home, from which the hero must contrive to extricate himself (cf. Most [n. 15], pp. 27–9). Such offers once made, even when their nature is apparently understood by all parties, become increasingly difficult to ignore. In the *Aeneid*, Dido's offer of a place in her kingdom ominously foreshadows Aeneas' apparent acceptance of a role as consort to Dido.

35 See Reece (n. 30), p. 25. The issue of the guest's willingness to return the hospitality appears explicitly later at *Aen*. 4.537ff.

36 Cf. Sen. *Ben*. 4.11.3.

37 Cf. Sen. *Ben*. 2.22 *qui grate beneficium accipit, primam eius pensionem solvit*.

38 Cf. Sen. *Ben*. 2.22 *quam grate* [sc. *beneficium*] *ad nos pervenisse indicemus effusis adfectibus. quos non ipso tantum audiente sed ubique testemur*.

sentiment that while rivers run to the sea and there are stars in the sky, he will praise and honour her (1.607ff.). It could **[193]** be said here that while Dido makes serious offers of partnership and material assistance, Aeneas, whose words and actions are destined to destroy Dido, replies with empty and overblown sentiments. However, that would be to misunderstand the nature of the exchange between the two. An overly generous offer of help is met with an extravagant expression of thanks. An offer which promises too much is met with gratitude which is too profuse.[39] Aeneas skilfully recovers his footing with Dido, just as Dido had recovered hers with Ilioneus. As we shall see, a further attempt is made to recover status with the Trojans' gifts to Dido.

The End of *Aeneid* 1

The following scenes contain further standard elements from Homer. Dido escorts her guest inside her palace, as is common in many Homeric reception scenes. Dido also then provides for Aeneas' men and ships (1.633ff.), much as Menelaus provides for Telemachus' horses in Sparta (*Od*. 4.39ff.). The fact that she provides for the Trojans simultaneously with Aeneas, rather than tending first or solely to the needs of her most important visitor demonstrates her intention to be a good host. A feast is then prepared for the visitors (1.637ff.), followed by the after-dinner drink (1.723ff.), the sharing of a libation (1.728ff.), entertainment from a bard (1.740ff.), and finally the exchange of information between host and guest (1.748ff.).[40] The Homeric pattern is not followed to the letter, nor in order, but the resemblance is close and demonstrates to the reader that proper and traditional hospitality is being offered.[41]

The closing section of *Aeneid* 1, however, does contain another striking deviation from Homeric convention. In the *Odyssey*, gifts are routinely bestowed on the guest by the host. In return, the host expects that he will be remembered by the guest, as for example when Menelaus hopes that

39 However Roger Rees points out to me that, even in the Augustan era, the distinction between *grates* and *laudes* was rather hazy, and it was conventional for the *gratiarum actio* to be panegyrical in nature (cf. e.g. Ov. *Pont*. 4.4.35–9). As a result, in offering enthusiastic thanks, Aeneas may also be acting as a proto-Roman.

40 For these standard elements in Homer, see Reece (n. 30), pp. 20–31, 51–3, 62.

41 For the similarity also to Greek initiation rituals surrounding *ξενία*, see Herman (n. 28), pp. 22-3, 58–69,69ff.

his gift of a horse and chariot will cause Telemachus to be mindful of him all the days of his life (4.592). Elsewhere it is acknowledged that the receipt of a gift obliges the guest to make a return on it, should the host ever one day visit the home of his present guest.[42] In the *Aeneid*, Dido not only provides 'gifts' in the form of material provisions for Aeneas' men (1.633ff.), but later in the epic we learn of her particular guest-gifts to the Trojans, such as an ancient mixing-bowl (9.266), tunics embroidered with gold and purple (11.72–5), and a horse to Ascanius (5.571f.). At the feast given to welcome the Trojans, she requests remembrance (1.733). Later, in *Aeneid* 4, Aeneas repeats his promise to remember Dido (4.333ff.; cf. 1.607ff.).[43]

However, convention is broken at *Aeneid* 1.647ff., when Aeneas sends Achates to bring gifts for Dido, namely a cloak and a dress which had once belonged to Helen, the sceptre of Priam's eldest daughter (Ilione), and a crown and necklace. In Homer **[194]** gifts are never offered by guest to host, but only by host to guest.[44] Later in the *Aeneid*, during the embassy to Latinus, gifts are in fact bestowed by the Trojans on a potential ally (7.243ff.). Parallels suggest that it was a Roman custom to presents gifts to foreign dignitaries recognized as worthy friends and allies.[45] In Book 1, however, the Trojans are seeking temporary hospitality rather than requesting alliance, and the atmosphere is more obviously Homeric. Compare the observation of the convention in the similarly Homeric atmosphere of Book 3. In the Epirus episode, Helenus bestows gold, ivory, silver, etc., on the departing Trojans (3.463ff.). The Trojans do not bestow guest-gifts on the Epiriots. The breaking of Homeric convention in Book 1 is thus striking. What is the reader supposed to make of it? One obvious motivation for the breaking of convention must be the desire on Vergil's part to introduce bad omens for the relationship between Aeneas and Dido. In particular the gift of Helen's dress (1.650ff. *ornatus*

42 Cf. Athene-Mentes at *Od*. 1.318; Laertes at 24.283ff.

43 Dido doubts whether the Trojans will remember all her gifts and services to them, at 4.537ff. This is of course a serious attack on the Trojans' reputation for returning services.

44 See Reece (n. 30), p. 35 and S. West on Hom. *Od*. 1.318 (Oxford, 1988).

45 Cf. Liv. 30.15.11 (Scipio and Massinissa); Tac. *Ann*. 4.26 (the Senate and King Ptolemy of Mauretania). On the immediate exchange of gifts within ritualized friendship in the Greek world, see Herman (n. 28), pp. 60–3.

Argivae Helenae, quos ilia Mycenis,/ Pergama cum peteret inconcessosque hymenaeos,/ extulerat) appears sinister in the light of subsequent events. But I suggest that one further reason for the transgression lies in the concern with relative status and reciprocity that is clear in the preceding narrative. Ilioneus advertised his king, in Aeneas' hearing, as a man conspicuous for his sense of duty (1.545), and one with whom Dido would have 'nothing to fear or regret by taking the lead in a contest of *officia*' (1.548f.). In addition, Aeneas has made clear his inability (or that of the whole Trojan race for that matter) to make a proper return. He can offer only verbal manifestations of his gratitude (1.600ff.) – that is to say accept and acknowledge his inferior position. Nevertheless, Aeneas does now have something with which to recompense Dido. As the Homeric poems show, special value was attached to gifts with a history (e.g. Menelaus gives Telemachus a mixing bowl which he had been given by the king of the Sidonians, at *Od*. 4.613ff.[46]). The gifts which Aeneas gives to Dido are unique and irreplaceable, and arouse suitable feelings of wonder and admiration in Dido and the Carthaginians (1.709ff.). They make clear the pedigree of the Trojan guests, and demonstrate a willingness to make a return on services received. Aeneas might be criticized for making a return so quickly. Such behaviour is characteristic of those who do not wish to be in debt to anyone, and so make a return which breaks the socially cohesive bond of obligation between donor and recipient. But Aeneas has already made clear that no fully adequate return can be made. In addition, how is one to reckon up the value of Dido's help and offers of help, relative to the value of Aeneas' gifts to Dido?[47] The gifts recover status for the Trojans, but they do not break the bond of obligation between host and guest. However, there is a clear concern with relative status and reciprocity concerns which will return with greater force in the narrative of Book 4.[48]

46 Reece (n. 30), p. 36.

47 For the issue in ancient society of the relative values of services, see Saller (n. 23), pp. 16–17.

48 Other elements in the final sections of *Aeneid* 1 evince a similar concern with reciprocity. According to Homeric convention, news and information from the guest might act as a form of recompense for the host's hospitality; see Reece (n. 30), pp. 28, 55–6. Information is asked of Aeneas at 1.748ff. and provided by him in the form of the second and third books of the poem. Dido's demands for information become importunate later at 4.78f. Alcinous is a similarly over-demanding host in

I trust I have now brought out the implicit tension which exists between Aeneas and **[195]** Dido in the first book of the *Aeneid*. As we move into Book 4 we shall see how the hostility which erupts between them returns to the same issues which fed the tension in Book 1, namely reciprocity and relative status. We shall also start looking more closely at the standards of behaviour within *hospitium* to which Aeneas and Dido both appeal and which they seek to justify.

Aeneid 4

In Aeneas' narrative of his wanderings in Book 3, he shows himself to be a good and conscientious *hospes*.[49] At Epirus, for example, Helenus and Andromache refit and resupply his fleet, and shower him with guest-gifts. Aeneas makes a conscientious return on this by promising that the peoples of Hesperia and Epirus will one day be united (3.502ff.). This scene in particular acts as a paradigm of proper hospitality followed by the happy departure of the guest. The function of *Aeneid* 3 here may be compared to the function of Odysseus' narrative to the Phaeacians, which is in part designed to warn the Phaeacians to act as good hosts and send him on his way.[50]

When we return to the main narrative in Book 4, Dido has of course fallen in love with Aeneas. It is here that the expected forward movement of correspondences with the typical Homeric hospitality scene comes to a halt. We find no bestowal of guest-gifts by Dido on Aeneas in anticipation of departure (although guest-gifts are mentioned incidentally in the later books of the epic). Nor is there a departure meal, libation and farewell blessing, etc. Instead the guest is detained by the host. There are, however, clear parallels for this in Homeric hospitality scenes. In the *Odyssey*, Nestor is a famously over-zealous host, and Telemachus must ask his son to assist him in avoiding a meeting with Nestor on his return journey past Pylos.[51] Menelaus in Sparta also appears to wish to detain Telemachus. Nevertheless on the latter's departure he makes a

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the *Odyssey*.

49 For the Trojans as good *hospites* in *Aeneid* 3, even when under pressure or provocation, see H. A. Khan, 'The Harpies episode in *Aeneid* 3', *Prometheus* 22 (1996), 131–44.

50 See Most (n. 15).

51 Reece (n. 30), pp. 67–9.

speech on the blameworthiness of hosts who detain guests who wish to leave.[52] Dido's detainment of Aeneas corresponds to these Homeric scenes, but with one important difference. She explicitly wishes to detain her guest – or she is encouraged to do so by her sister Anna, *indulge hospitio causasque innecte morandi, / dum pelago desaevit hiems et aquosus Orion, / quassataeque rates, dum non tractabile caelum* 'be lavish with your welcome, and weave pleas for delay, while at sea winter rages fiercely and Orion is stormy – while the ships are shattered, and the skies intractable!' (4.51ff.).[53]

It is soon after this point that the theme of *hospitium*, which has been the focus of this paper, loses its dominance in Vergil's text. After the scene in the cave (4.166ff.) Dido feels sure that she has other claims on Aeneas in addition to those of *hospitium*. As stated at the beginning of the paper, the much (and inconclusively) discussed issue of 'marriage' is one I intend to leave aside, in favour of a continued focus on the neglected issue of *hospitium*.[54] Such a focus may be justified by the fact that Dido is ultimately forced to rely on the issue of *hospitium* alone in her attempt to establish **[196]** public claims on Aeneas. She drops the claim to marriage, and although she continues to appeal to Aeneas' emotions, Dido ends on a defiant note of the renunciation of *hospitium* (4.622ff.). She is effectively forced, as we shall see, to have recourse to the one area, *hospitium*, where she can make public assertions about her relationship with Aeneas without being told that she has no right to make such claims.

Dido's First Speech to the Departing Aeneas: 4.305–30

In Dido's first encounter with Aeneas after she has heard that he is planning to leave, she makes a long speech in which she pleads with him on three levels. The first plea is made on the emotional level (307

52 Hom. *Od*. 15.68ff. The scenes where Menelaus detains Telemachus in Sparta in fact provide a rich context for the interpretation of *Aeneid* 4.1-330. On Menelaus' hospitality, see further Reece (n. 30), pp. 88–98.

53 For the relationship between Anna and Dido, see further D. P. Nelis, *Vergil's Aeneid and the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius* (Cambridge: Francis Cairns, 2001).

54 On the issue of the 'marriage', however, see especially R. Green, '*Conubium* in the *Aeneid*', in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* 4 (Collections Latomus 196, 1986), 393–421.

noster amor; 314 *lacrimas*, etc.). The second plea revolves around the duties of the *hospes*. She refers at 307 and 314 to his 'right hand'. The right hand has many significances, including that of marriage. But the one I wish to focus on here is that of the clasping of the right hand to signify the initiation of a host-guest relationship.[55] This is allied with the plea at 317, *si bene quid de te merui* 'if ever I deserved well of you'. Here an appeal is made to the obligation on the guest to reciprocate, by implying that Dido has performed services for Aeneas which deserve a return, such as rescuing him from shipwreck and receiving him as her guest.[56] A third plea is found at 316 with the reference to their marriage. The latter two appeals are combined at 323f., when Dido witheringly remarks that *hospes* is obviously the only name she can now give the man who used to be her husband. All three are designed to place pressure on Aeneas; each is intended to oblige him to stay by reminding him of his duties to her as (respectively) lover, guest, and husband.

The Departing Aeneas' Reply to Dido: 4.333–61

Where Dido had appealed to Aeneas on the levels of emotion, *hospitium*, and marriage, Aeneas avoids broaching the emotional aspects directly (although 4.335f. and 361 hint at the depth of the emotions within him) and concentrates on the latter two claims.[57] He deals first with his duties as a guest (4.333–36):

55 For the right hand of *hospitium*, cf. e.g. Hom. *Od.* 1.121; Verg. *Aen.* 2.83 (Anius on Delos) *iungimus hospitio dextras et tecta subimus*; Monti (n. 2), 3–8; Reece (n. 30), p. 20. It is interesting to note that when Aeneas and Dido meet, host and guest do not take one another by the hand, as is often the case in the Homeric poems (e.g. Telemachus grasps the right hand of Athene-Mentes at 1.121). Reece (p. 20) suggests that for a man and woman to clasp hands suggests seduction, where the man is about to lead the woman off to bed. Vergil instead shows us Aeneas grasping the hands of Ilioneus and his fellow Trojans (1.610ff.).

56 Monti (n. 2), pp. 41–2.

57 On this speech, see especially D. Feeney, 'The taciturnity of Aeneas', *CQ* 33 (1983), 204–19. Feeney sums up well the implication of Aeneas' speech for the issue of the rhetorical appeal to the emotions in public discourse: 'What Aeneas is telling Dido here is that her words are a reckless incitement of passion, by which both of them are being made to suffer for no purpose: with remonstration and passionate protest alone nothing can be achieved but torture' (p. 210).

> 'ego te, quae plurima fando
> enumerare vales, numquam, regina, negabo
> promeritam, nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae
> dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus.'
>
> I will never deny, Queen, that you have deserved of me the utmost you can set forth in speech, nor shall my memory of Elissa be bitter, while I have memory of myself, and while breath governs these limbs.

Aeneas asserts that he does not deny that she deserves a return on her services to him as host. He will give her the only adequate return that he can by remembering her (i.e. he will spread abroad her fame and reputation and be ready to make a return should **[197]** an appropriate occasion ever arise).[58] The implication is that, if Dido thinks that part of the guest's return on services received involves the obligation on him to stay, then she is mistaken. The claims of marriage are then dealt with in one and a half lines: *pro re pauca loquar. neque ego hanc abscondere furto / speravi* (*ne finge*) *fugam, nec coniugis umquam / praetendi taedas aut haec in foedera veni* (4.337–9). Aeneas claims that he never offered her marriage or entered into that contract with her. Dido, he implies, has no claim on him here and cannot oblige him to stay with this assertion. The overall message is that their only relationship is that of host and guest, and here he has fulfilled and will continue to fulfil his obligations.

Dido's Final Speech to Aeneas: 4.365–87

In her reply, Dido drops any appeal to the marriage bond between them. Instead Dido concentrates on the appeal to the emotions and especially on the obligations of *hospitium* – a relationship which was consummated openly in view of Carthaginian and Trojan and could not be denied (4.370–8):

58 For *memor* and *mereo* and cognates as part of the language of reciprocity and obligation, see Monti (n. 2), p. 44, also Saller (n. 23), pp. 20–1.

num lacrimas victus dedit aut miseratus amantem est?
quae quibus anteferam? iam iam nec maxima Iuno
nec Saturnius haec oculis pater aspicit aequis.
nusquam tuta fides. eiectum litore, egentem
excepi et regni demens in parte locavi.
amissam classem, socios a morte reduxi
(heu furiis incensa feror!): nunc augur Apollo,
nunc Lyciae sortes, nunc et love missus ab ipso
interpres divum fert horrida iussa per auras.

Did he sigh while I wept? Did he turn on me a glance? Did he yield and shed tears or pity her who loved him? What shall I say first? What next? Now, neither mighty Juno nor the Saturnian sire looks on these things with righteous eyes! Nowhere is faith secure. I welcomed him, a castaway on the shore, a beggar, and madly gave him a share in my throne; his lost fleet I rescued, his crews I saved from death. Alas! I am whirled on the fires of frenzy. Now prophetic Apollo, now the Lycian oracles, now the messenger of the gods sent from Jove himself, brings through the air this dread command.

After the appeal to the emotions (370), Dido returns to the issues of status, reciprocity, and dependence on another which fuelled the tension between her and Aeneas in the first book. It is stated that two divinities associated with *hospitium*, namely Juno and Jupiter, cannot look at this scene with the eyes of justice (371f.).[59] Next it is stated that *fides* is nowhere to be found (373). *Fides* is naturally a quality essential for friendship between strangers and one that ensures the return of services.[60] This is followed by a list of all the services she has performed for Aeneas, such as providing for Aeneas' troubled fleet and companions (375). As for Aeneas himself, she took him in (resourceless as he was) and settled him *regni . . . in parte* (374). In fact, these are the services on which Aeneas does not deny that Dido deserves a return (4.333ff.). Of the services listed, the most striking is the assertion that Aeneas has actually taken up the spectacular offer of a place in her kingdom which initiated their relationship. A relevant

59 For Juno, Jupiter, and *hospitium*, see L. J. Bolchazy, *Hospitality in Early Rome: Livy's Concept of its Humanising Force* (Chicago, 1977), p. 27.

60 See Monti (n. 2), pp. 39–40, 57; Saller (n. 23), p. 15.

parallel for understanding this scene is the ability of Roman emperors to bestow favours which subjects were quite unable to repay (of which the obvious forerunner is the exercise by Julius Caesar of his notorious *clementia*). As Saller remarks, 'Subjects . . . are left to acknowledge their gratitude and inability to repay in kind – in other words, to accept and acknowledge their inferior position.'[61] No doubt this is what Dido now desires from Aeneas – an **[198]** acknowledgement of his dependent position in relation to her. Here we may compare the (fictitious) story which Odysseus tells Eumaeus in *Odyssey* 14.257–86 about his adventures in Egypt. There Odysseus claims to have been involved in a raid on Egypt. However, when they were met by a superior force, Odysseus, in order to avoid death or enslavement, supplicated the enemy king. The king raised him from the status of suppliant to *ξένος* and protected him from assault. Odysseus subsequently stayed on in Egypt with the king for seven years – no doubt as a form of recompense to the king for the 'unrepayable' service of saving his life when the king might have killed Odysseus with impunity.[62] It is clear that Dido expects a similar recompense from Aeneas.

Issues of Status and Reciprocity

What are we to make of these claims and counterclaims? Can Dido assert that her services to Aeneas place him in a position which makes him obliged to, and dependent on, her? Are her services equivalent to those of the Egyptian king towards Odysseus, who by rights had the power of life and death over Odysseus?[63] As for Aeneas, can he walk away with a simple acknowledgement that Dido deserves a return, that he will give her the best return he is currently in a position to give, and with an assurance of spreading her reputation abroad and of making a more adequate return should the opportunity ever arise? These questions are important in as much as a person's whole moral personality and reputation were publicly at stake in relationships of

61 Saller (n. 23), p. 70. For the tension which could arise in such situations, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.18 *nam beneficia eo usque laeta sunt dum videntur exsolvi posse: ubi multum antevenere, pro gratia odium redditur*.

62 For such 'unrepayable' debts, see also Herman (n. 28), p. 122.

63 Furthermore is she confusing her personal *hospitium* relationship with Aeneas, with the political and more statutory relationship of alliances between states?

this type.[64] Furthermore we may be sure that these questions are being explicitly formulated, in as much as the very appearance of the proper vocabulary of *hospitium* in the *Aeneid* (e.g. *pietas*, *officium*, *memor* and cognates, *mereo* and cognates, *hospitium*, *fides*, *gratus* and cognates) is so striking. Catullus and the Roman love-elegists use the concepts of reciprocity associated with the analogous relationship of *amicitia* in their relationships with their beloveds, but the elegists in particular avoid a widespread use of its technical vocabulary and often substitute synonyms or metaphors. This in part derives from concerns with genre and the low stylistic value of the vocabulary of *amicitia*.[65] But Vergil, in the genre of epic, uses the technical vocabulary of *hospitium* consistently and precisely.

In a society where ingratitude was frequently asserted to be the greatest social crime, there will have been a keen awareness of the need to be seen to fulfil obligations. This applies both to daily social relations, and to relationships between important public figures, where accusations of ingratitude and bad faith were common and undoubtedly carried weight in public discourse. In the second *Philippic*, Cicero is obliged to take seriously Antony's accusations of ingratitude and ruptured friendship.[66] The *beneficium* for which he is supposed to be obliged to Antony consists in the latter's having saved or spared Cicero's life at Brindisium. Cicero replies (*Phil*. 2.5f.): **[199]**

> at beneficio sum tuo usus. quo? quamquam illud ipsum quod commemoras semper prae me tuli: malui me tibi debere confiteri quam cuiquam minus prudenti non satis gratus videri. sed quo beneficio? quod me Brundisi non occideris? . . . quod est aliud, patres conscripti, beneficium latronum nisi ut commemorare possint eis se dedisse vitam quibus non ademerint? quod si esset beneficium, numquam qui illum interfecerunt a quo erant conservati, quos tu ipse clarissimos viros soles appellare, tantam essent gloriam consecuti. quale autem beneficium est quod te abstinueris nefario scelere? . . . sed sit beneficium, quando

64 Herman (n. 28), p. 126.

65 See R. K. Gibson, 'How to win girlfriends and influence them: *amicitia* in Roman love elegy', *PCPS* 41 (1995), 62–82, at 72–3.

66 *Phil*. 2.3 . . . *de amicitia quam a me violatam esse criminatus est, quod gravissimum crimen iudico, pauca dicam*.

> quidem maius accipi a latrone nullum potuit: in quo potes me dicere ingratum? an de interitu rei publicae queri non debui, ne in te ingratus viderer?
>
> You say I availed myself of a kindness from you. What kindness? To be sure, what you are talking about is indeed something I have always been the first to acknowledge. I have preferred to confess myself in your debt rather than let some foolish person think me wanting in gratitude. But what was the kindness? That you did not kill me at Brundisium? . . . That is the sort of kindness one gets from bandits, Members of the Senate: they can say they granted their lives to those whose lives they did not take. If that were a kindness, those who killed the man who had spared them, whom you yourself often call 'illustrious gentlemen', would never have won so much glory. But where is the kindness in abstaining from an atrocious crime? . . . But grant it was a kindness, since none greater could be accepted from a bandit: where can you say I have been ungrateful? Should I have refrained from protesting at the destruction of the Republic for fear of seeming ungrateful to you?

Cicero questions the quality of the service without, however, denying outright that it was a *beneficium*. Finally he overrules ties of personal obligation with the patriot's duty to the Republic.[67] As Konstan comments, 'Cicero is . . . at pains to be seen neither as defaulting on a moral debt . . . nor as terminating an amicable association, however superficial, by a gratuitously hostile gesture that might count as *iniuria*.'[68] The passage is thus witness to the seriousness with which issues of reciprocity and gratitude were taken.[69] (In addition the aggression and rhetorical dexterity of Cicero's defence make an interesting contrast with Aeneas' rather repressed reply to Dido.)

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67 This is also an excuse (retrospectively) for Aeneas.

68 Konstan (n. 1), p. 127. Similar accusations were made in the propaganda war between Octavian and Antony-Cleopatra.

69 Cf. Cic. *Off*. 1.59 *haec igitur et talia circumspicienda sunt in omni officio, ut boni ratiocinatores officiorum esse possimus et addenda deducendoque videre, quae reliqui summa fiat, ex quo, quantum cuique debeatur, intellegas*. In practical terms this is unrealistic, in as much as the services exchanged in Roman society were often different in kind and their relative value could not easily be reckoned (see Saller [n. 23], pp. 15–17). Nevertheless, the passage is witness to the pressure exerted on participants in social relationships to be seen to reciprocate services adequately.

One factor, however, which complicates (or enriches) the issue here is that *hospitium* depends on moral principles of duty and reciprocity which everyone is implicitly supposed to share, rather than on explicitly drafted regulations. There is no written code and little evidence for a systematic attempt to codify the exact duties of host and guest, to define the limits of loyalty, or to lay down the exact values of services exchanged so that a recipient might know when a donor had received commensurate return. As a result *hospitium*, very much like *amicitia*, consists essentially of actions in the name of *hospitium* and comments made on those actions.[70] It is a discursive practice rather than a formal and tightly regulated institution. This may suggest that when Vergil poses us his question about the behaviour of his characters within *hospitium*, it may be a question designed to provoke moral debate, rather than one which is designed to be answered without equivocation.[71]

Even after Aeneas and Dido have seen one another for the last time, the issue recurs. At 4.424 she casts herself in the role of suppliant on her own soil (when originally it was the resourceless Trojans who were forced to come as suppliants to her). Aeneas is transformed from *hospes* to *hostis*: *i, soror, atque hostem supplex adfare superbum*.[72] Dido's reduction to the state of suppliant returns with greater force to her when she is alone at night (4.534–39):

en quid ago? rursusne procos inrisa priores
experiar, Nomadumque petam conubia supplex,
[200]
quos ego sim totiens iam dedignata maritos?
Iliacas igitur classis atque ultima Teucrum
iussa sequar? quiane auxilio iuvat ante levatos
et bene apud memores veteris stat gratia facti?

70 In my formulation here I follow closely Herman (n. 28), p. 118. See also Konstan (n. 1), pp. 36–7.

71 However, note that the narrator calls Aeneas *pius* directly following Dido's last speech to him (4.393).

72 On the ancient etymological relation of *hospes* and *hostis*, see Bolchazy (n. 59), pp. 19–20, and Reece (n. 30), p. 19.

> See, what am I to do? Shall I once more make trial of my old wooers, only to be mocked, and shall I humbly sue for marriage with Numidians, whom I have scorned so often as husbands? Shall I then follow the Ilian ships and the Trojan's uttermost commands? Is it because they are thankful for aid once given, and gratitude for past kindness stands firm in their mindful hearts?

She also here doubts whether the Trojans would take her with them to Italy. Despite the promises of Aeneas (1.609f.; 4.335f. *nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae / dum memor ipse mei*), she doubts whether the Trojans will remember (4.539 *memores*) her services to them and their obligation to repay. Nor, Dido asserts, is there likely any sign of *gratia* (4.539) – the quality which guarantees and anticipates a return on services rendered.[73] This is a serious attack on the moral reputation of the Trojans and their willingness to observe the cardinal principle of reciprocity. Finally, while Dido watches the Trojans leaving, she makes her last attacks on the Trojans as *hospites*: *infelix Dido*, *nunc te facta impia tangunt? / tum decuit*, *cum sceptra dabas*. *en dextra fidesque* 'Unhappy Dido, do only now the sinful deeds come home to you? Then was the time, when you gave your crown away. Behold the pledge and promise' (4.596f.). *Hospitium* is then finally renounced (4.624 *nullus amor populis nec foedera sunto*). But we are not allowed to forget the issue as we proceed through the epic, when we are reminded of Dido's services to the Trojans as host through references to her guest-gifts to Ascanius (5.571f.) and Aeneas (9.266, 11.72–5).

To return to our question, what are we to make of these claims and counterclaims about Dido and Aeneas' duties and behaviour to one another as host and guest? As suggested above, since *hospitium* is not a legal code, it may be that Vergil's questions are designed principally to provoke moral debate. But this needs qualification. It may be that it is only through taking sides that we learn more about the *Aeneid*. The sophistication and depth of the reader's engagement with the text are advanced by trying to answer the questions which Vergil sets. However, trying to answer Vergil's questions is perhaps,

73 For *gratia*, see Saller (n. 23), pp. 21–2 and Monti (n. 2), pp. 57–8.

ultimately, to be valued more as an exercise which makes us think harder about the question, rather than as one which is likely to lead to a solution.

Ancient Responses

A start here can be made by looking at some ancient responses to the problem. One we have already seen, namely Ovid's assertion *et famam pietatis habet, tamen hospes et ensem / praebuit et causam mortis, Elissa, tuae* (*Ars* 3.39f.). Here Aeneas is said not to have lived up to his reputation for being conscientious in his duties as a *hospes* – by providing an unworthy return to Dido. He caused her death. This blunt assertion is of course designed specifically to please his female addressees. In context they are about to be denied Ovid's erotodidaxis on the grounds that women are already faithless enough towards men without being given yet more encouragement from the poet. But this 'pessimistic' reading of the *Aeneid* is anticipated in *Heroides* 7 where Ovid carries on the argument over the rights and duties of host and guest in the persona of Dido.[74] According to the Ovidian view, which instinctively sides with the **[201]** suffering lover, Aeneas the faithless guest betrayed Dido who took him in. How common this view was we have no way of knowing, but it cannot have been a response unique to Ovid. However, readers who are drawn, like Ovid, to sympathize with the suffering lover must acknowledge the emotional and consciously provocative nature of the poet's response.[75]

A passage from Seneca's work on reciprocal services (*de Beneficiis*) provides a different perspective on the issue. At 4.11.3 Seneca discusses the giving of benefits in the sure knowledge that one will not receive

74 Cf. esp. 7.27f. *ille quidem male gratus et ad mea munera surdus, / et quo, si non sim stulta, carere velim*; 89ff. *fluctibus eiectum tuta statione recepi / vixque bene audito nomine regna dedi. / his tamen officis utinam contenta fuissem, / et mihi concubitus fama sepulta foret*; 167f. *si pudet uxoris, non nupta, sed hospita dicar, / dum tua sit, Dido quidlibet esse feret*; 177f. *pro meritis et siqua tibi debebimus ultra, / pro spe coniugii tempora parva peto*. On the 'pessimistic' reading of the *Aeneid* implicit in the epistle, see, briefly, P. E. Knox, *Ovid, Heroides: Select Epistles* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 201–2.

75 In a more public and national poem, the *Fasti*, Ovid may adopt a less incriminatory view of Aeneas. See C. Newlands, 'Ovid's narrator in the *Fasti*', *Arethusa* 25 (1992), 33–54, at 42.

a return, such as for example when the recipient is about to depart for a foreign country never to return, or the donor is ill without hope of recovery. He insists that giving at such times is desirable, and uses the scene of saving someone from shipwreck as an illustration of this principle:

> atqui ut scias rem per se expetendam esse bene facere, advenis modo in nostrum delatis portum, statim abituris, succurrimus; ignoto naufrago navem, qua revehatur, et damus et struimus. discedit ille vix satis noto salutis auctore et numquam amplius in conspectum nostrum reversurus debitores nobis deos delegat precaturque, illi pro se gratiam referant; interim nos iuvat sterilis beneficii conscientia.
>
> And yet, that you may know that generous action is something desirable in itself, the foreigner who has just put into our harbour, and will straightway depart, receives our assistance; to a shipwrecked stranger, in order that he may sail back home, we both give a ship and equip it. He leaves us scarcely knowing who was the author of his salvation, and, expecting never more to see our faces again, he deputes the gods to be our debtors, and prays that they may repay the favour in his stead; meanwhile we rejoice in the consciousness of having given a benefit that will yield no fruit.

This is a viewpoint which readers might choose to apply to the problems set for them by Vergil, in a situation where the debts incurred are by ordinary standards 'unrepayable'.[76] Dido ought to take pleasure in her 'consciousness of having given a benefit that will yield no fruit'. Aeneas, for his part, does more than 'depute the gods to be the debtors, and pray that they may repay the favour in his stead'. He departs with a promise to spread abroad her fame as a benefactor – as the properly grateful recipient was supposed to do: *quam grate* [sc. *beneficium*] *ad nos pervenisse indicemus effusis adfectibus*, *quos non ipso tantum audiente sed ubique testemur* 'Let us show how grateful we are for the blessing that has come to us by pouring forth our feelings, and let us bear witness to them,

76 Cf. also the famous discussion at *Ben*. 7.25 of Dido's appeal to her favours to Aeneas (*Aen*. 4.317–18) and of her later accusing list of services (*Aen*. 4.373–4).

not merely in the hearing of the giver, but everywhere' (*Ben*. 2.22). With these sentiments in mind the reader might choose to believe that Aeneas can depart with impunity and without further obligation. Similar points of view, which may be used to defend Aeneas' conduct, are expressed in Aristotle.[77] Furthermore, it could be pointed out that the situation of Dido and Aeneas is hardly parallel to that of Odysseus and the Egyptian king above, where Odysseus is by implication obliged to stay with the king for an indefinite period. Dido, unlike the Egyptian king, did not by rights have power of life and death over her guest, because Aeneas and the Trojans (as llioneus is careful to emphasize) come not as invaders or pirates but as refugees bound for another destination. The Egyptian king's right of directly granting life or taking it away gave him immense power over Odysseus. What power do Dido's services to the Trojans grant her over Aeneas? But the adoption of the viewpoint encouraged by these reflections demands that the reader sympathize with Aeneas' **[202]** severe attitude towards his relationship with Dido. For Aeneas, as we saw above, implicitly asserts that the only relationship between them is that of host and guest. That is to say, their relationship may have deepened, but has not altered in essence, since they first met in *Aeneid* 1. But what of the emotional claims that Dido makes on Aeneas, her appeals to love, pity, and tears (4.307ff., 4.370ff.)? Such claims have traditionally moved readers.[78] To sympathize with Aeneas' refusal to let his emotions enter the scene would involve the adoption of the austere conventional view that love has no place in the public sphere. Traditionally love may not enter public discourse.[79] It is an area set apart,

77 Cf e.g. *N.E.* 1164a22ff. 'But which has the better right to assess the value of the service, the man who proffers it, or the one who has actually received it? The latter, because the man who makes the offer virtually leaves the decision to him'; 1164a33ff. 'When no contract for service is made . . . the return should be made in proportion to the intention of the benefactor (for it is the intention that counts both in friendship and in virtue) . . . for the value of this is not measurable in money, nor could such a service be balanced by a gift of honour. Presumably it is enough if (as in the case of the gods or one's parents) the beneficiary makes such a return as lies in his power' (trans. J. A. K. Thomson).

78 Cf. the famous passage in the *Confessions*: *cogebar . . . et plorare Didonem mortuam, quia se occidit ob amorem . . . quid enim miserius misero non miserante se ipsum et flente Didonis mortem, quae fiebat amando Aeneam . . .?* (Aug. *Conf*. 1.13).

79 This issue is sensitively raised and discussed by Vergil, in passages where Aeneas attempts to control the emotions within himself or avoid them when they are of no

where, as Ovid makes clear in the *Ars Amatoria*, the rules which govern conventional social intercourse do not apply. Here promises count for nothing. (Ovid even encourages the lover to swear false oaths and use deception – with impunity and with divine sanction.[80]) Emotions can establish no automatic or unquestionable claims.[81] No doubt this is why Dido eventually drops even the appeal to the emotions to concentrate on the claims of *hospitium*. She is forced, as we saw above, to have recourse to the one area where she can argue publicly with Aeneas without risking being told that she cannot make any claims. However, to sympathize with Aeneas then involves acknowledgement of the inadmissibility of the emotions to public discourse and the severe reduction of his relationship with Dido to that of host and guest. As with the Ovidian response, readers have a price to pay. To take the Ovidian view of Dido the reader must sacrifice much to the emotions. To respond to Aeneas involves the refusal to admit those same emotions.

In conclusion, we have seen the importance of the *hospitium* theme in Books 1 and 4 of the *Aeneid*. The tension between Aeneas and Dido in Book 1 revolves around the issues of reciprocity, relative status, and dependency which a *hospitium* relationship necessarily raises. In the fourth book, when hostility erupts between Aeneas and Dido, claims and counterclaims are made partly on the basis of their roles as host and guest, and eventually reduced to being made for the most part, because most effectively, on the basis of those roles. These claims and counterclaims are then set before the reader as an issue for judgement. Whichever way the individual reader reacts, it should be clear that it is at least possible for readers to resist the claims of Dido here – if at an obvious cost.

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use to either party; cf. 4.293f., 4.331f., 4.393-5, 4.438ff., 4.447ff.; also Vergil's editorial comment on Dido's emotions at 4.412ff.

80 *Ars* 1.631–58, where the exceptional nature of the lovers' ethical world is strongly and explicitly marked.

81 This makes the writing of Roman love poetry possible. The love elegists, conditioned to the expectation of reciprocity in their civic relationships with men, are denied this in their erotic relationships with women. The writing of love elegy – in the mode of complaint – is the result.

Fig. 23: Medea killing one of her sons. Side A from a Campanian red-figure neck-amphora (ca. 330 BC) from Cumae. Louvre, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Medeia_child_Louvre_K300.jpg

Chapter 7: Furthest Voices in Virgil's Dido

Alessandro Schiesaro

'We have to stop somewhere, but we also have to face the fact that any particular stopping-place is therefore our choice, and carries with it ideological implications.'
– *Don Fowler*[1]

'Magnus est Maro'.
– *I. L. La Cerda*[2]

Part one

Reading Dido – in the *Aeneid* and beyond – has always been an intensely charged literary and political game. A sensitive, loving woman, Dido offers Aeneas a real alternative to the complex business of setting Rome in motion, and her death shows the enormous price there is to pay in terms of human fulfilment and happiness for the sake of empire building. How more or less sympathetic and straightforward she is seen to be is of course crucial to our perception of Aeneas as epic hero, and to the meaning of the *Aeneid* as a whole. It is only natural that throughout the 20th century, and into the 21st, critics have overwhelmingly packaged this fascinating character as the archetypical 'other voice' to the poem's teleological (not to say 'Augustan') plot.

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1 D. P. Fowler 1997: 25 = 2000: 127–128.

2 La Cerda: vol. 1, p. 441.

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[61] This comfortable opposition rests to a significant extent on a one-sided reading of Dido's emotional intricacies. Already ancient poets and readers, from Ovid to the Christians, vigorously edited Virgil's Dido to produce their own challenge to his epic. Building upon Heinze's influential treatment, modern critics have favoured a comparable approach: current readings emphasize the image of a loving and forlorn heroine whose short outbursts of rage and fury are evanescent – and justified. Yet as I set out to show here, a reading that is willing to delve further into the intertextual complexities of Dido's character, and to probe the relation between intertextual trace and unconscious impulse[3] in Book 4, reveals a darker, more thrilling and suspenseful narrative than modern critics have often allowed themselves to imagine.

This paper started life as a note on a famous and much debated passage at the heart of the book, where Dido's intricate, opaque language appears to convey more than meets the eye. I decided to retain its original inductive structure even as it grew to chart more widely the complexities of Virgil's construction of Dido's character in other sections of Book 4, and Ovid's rewriting of Dido in his *Heroides*[4].

1. At a crucial juncture in the sequence of events that lead to Aeneas' departure and Dido's suicide, the queen makes a desperate attempt to persuade Aeneas to postpone his plans. She addresses her sister Anna and begs her to approach him (424–436)[5].

3 I hope to be able to offer a theoretical justification of my reading strategy elsewhere. Here I will freely resort to concepts such as 'textual unconscious' (with implied inverted commas) trusting that the way I use them is clear enough, but I also want to acknowledge an important debt to Francesco Orlando's masterful work. It is in any case worth pointing out that whenever I attribute feelings and emotions (conscious or otherwise) to Dido or other characters I actually intend to refer to the text's own linguistic construction of those feelings.

4 This paper is part of a wider study of Dido's characterization and models. It should be read in conjunction with Schiesaro 2005, which develops some closely connected issues.

5 Text and apparatus, here and elsewhere, are Mynors'. Commentaries (and basic works of reference) are referred to by name only, except when the date of publication is relevant to the discussion and is therefore specified, or when reference is made to the introduction or other narrative parts. A convenient list of Virgilian commentaries can be found in Knauer 1964: 13–17.

[62]

'i, soror, atque hostem supplex adfare superbum:
non ego cum Danais Troianam exscindere gentem
Aulide iuravi classemve ad Pergama misi,
nec patris Anchisae cinerem manisve revelli:
cur mea dicta negat duras demittere in auris?
quo ruit? extremum hoc miserae det munus amanti:
exspectet facilemque fugam ventosque ferentis.
non iam coniugium antiquum, quod prodidit, oro,
nec pulchro ut Latio careat regnumque relinquat:
tempus inane peto, requiem spatiumque furori,
dum mea me victam doceat fortuna dolere.
extremam hanc oro veniam (miserere sororis),
quam mihi cum dederit cumulatam morte remittam.'

436 dederit *MPp* : dederis *ω, Seru*. cumulatam *Ppω*, *Seru*. : cumulata *Mb?*; -ris -tam '*Tucca et Varius*', -rit -ta '*male quidam*' *ap. Seru*.

['Go, sister, and humbly address our haughty foe. I never conspired with the Danaans at Aulis to root out the Trojan race; I never sent a fleet to Pergamus, nor tore up the ashes and disturbed the spirit of his father Anchises. Why does he refuse to admit my words to his stubborn ears? Whither does he hasten? This, the last boon, let him grant his poor lover: let him await an easy flight and favouring winds. No more do I plead for the old marriage tie which he forswore, nor that he give up fair Latium and resign his realm: for empty time I ask, for peace and reprieve for my frenzy, till fortune teach my vanquished soul to grieve. This last grace I crave – pity your sister –which, when he has granted it, I will repay with full interest in my death.']

Already DServius[6] reached the conclusion that Dido here *perplexe locuta est*[7], and in fact the entire speech is dense, allusive, and complex, as

6 DServius on 436, quoted in full later, p. 190/74. Cf. Pöschl's 1962: 84-85 succinct but useful analysis.

7 Among later commentators, La Cerda (apart from displaying his usual mastery of literary models and nuances) is more attuned than most to the complexities and

befits a tragic heroine who is gradually realising the enormity of the approaching catastrophe. The peculiarly intricate last few lines have much worried scholars – again, at least since Servius. Just about every word in line 436 has spurred sustained critical analysis: the alternative between *dederit* and *dederis*; between *cumulatam* and *cumulata*; the interpretation of *morte* and that of *remittam*, have all been hotly debated. In spite of Peerlkamp's despondent prediction that 'haec nemo unquam intellexit, neque intelliget,' a reasonable degree of critical consensus appears to have crystallized around the text printed above since the middle of the 19th century, with Ribbeck's critical edi- **[63]** tion (1859)[8]. Pease's paraphrase gives a view shared by most contemporary interpreters: 'I beg this last favor – pity your (poor) sister –, and when he shall have granted it my death will return it with interest'[9]. Aeneas, not Anna, should grant the *venia* of a short delay, the *extremum ... munus* mentioned at 429: hence *dederit*, not *dederis*, a simplification predictably inspired by *miserere sororis* in the line before[10]. Pease intentionally

ambiguities of Dido's words, in Book 4 in general, and in this section in particular – terms such as *dissimulare*, *insinuare*, *latere*, *ambages*, *circuitus* recur. See for instance his sharp note on 419–420 (La Cerda: 441), where he rightly argues that *si potui tantum sperare dolorem, / et perferre, soror, potero* 'insinuat, non posse se perferri, quia id non potuit sperare', or on 422 *te colere* (cf. n. 172).

8 The text *dederit cumulatam* is then printed by Ladewig, Schaper[6] (1870); Forbiger[4] (1872-75); Sabbadini (1884-881); Page (1894–1900); Mackail (1930); Sabbadini (1930); Buscaroli (1932); Pease (1935); Paratore (1947); Austin (1955); Mynors (1969); Geymonat (1973, 2008); Williams (1972). On *dederis* cf. n. 10, on *cumulata* below pp. 75-81.

9 Pease on 436. Cf. also Austin on 436: 'and when he has granted this kindness to me, I shall repay it a thousandfold at my death.'

10 *Dederis* was long the standard reading, accepted among others by La Cerda, Heinsius, Burman, Heyne-Wagner, up to and including Forbiger[3] (1852). After the success of Ribbeck's choice of *dederit*, only Conington, Nettleship retain *dederis*. J. Henry 1853 and 1857 prefer *dederit*, but J. Henry 1873-92 returns to *dederis*. Vivona 1898: 431 believes that the bulk of 416–436 was originally spoken by Dido herself to Aeneas, but Virgil later changed the narrative pattern for variation's sake: *dederis*, which Tucca and Varius must have read in Virgil's autograph, would testify to the original plan. On the contrary, Sabbadini 1900 argues that the original version of the passage (without 431-434, and with no mention of Anna), featured *dederit*, with *morte* as an instrumental; subsequently Virgil introduced Anna, switched to *dederis*, and gave *morte* a temporal sense. But Sabbadini's 1930 edition prefers *dederit*, cf. also Sabbadini 1910–20: IX-X, where *dederis* is regarded as an 'espediente provvisorio.' This primitive version of the text lacked 431-434, and assigned no role to Anna; but in the later version *cumulatam morte remittam* contradicts the context – and *dederis* was therefore revived by those seeking to eliminate the contradiction (against the possibility that surviving mss. of the *Aeneid* may preserve variant readings see in

preserves almost all the different nuances enshrined in the ablative *morte*[11]. *Cumulatam* refers back to *veniam*[12], in a well-established use of the verb ('to increase, augment, enhance')[13], while *remittere* takes the place of the more common *referre* or *reddere*[14].

[64] I will return to these and other issues later, for in the first instance I want to dwell on a point which does not appear to have attracted much curiosity, let alone concern, namely the nature and import of the *venia* which Dido begs of Aeneas[15]. Her request appears simple enough: *tempus inane peto, requiem spatiumque furori* (433). The meaning of *inanis* is sometimes difficult to pin down in Virgil[16], but in this case commentators and translators appear to agree: 'a few vacant hours' (Conington); 'time without action (on your part)' (Pease); 'a mere nothing – just time' (Day Lewis)[17]; 'time, a blank time' (Austin)[18]. At one level *inane* is meant to appeal to Aeneas' point of view – the time Dido asks for would be of little use to him anyway because weather conditions are not favourable to navigation in the winter season: he might as well await favourable winds and an easy departure, *facilemque fugam ventosque ferentis* (430). But *inane* also reassures Aeneas that, should she be granted it, Dido will not use this time to try and rebuild their relationship or to persuade him to stay at Carthage, as she makes clear at 431–432 and as Servius clumsily translates in the promise that she

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general Geymonat 1995: 297–298). A recent attempt to revive *dederis* (Murgia 1987) has been effectively refuted by Casali 1999.

11 The addition of 'my,' however, is not neutral, and occludes possible further meanings: see paragraph 3 below.

12 Contemporary editors, unlike most of their predecessors, usually avoid placing a comma after *dederit*. Some 'old editions' punctuated rather after *cumulatam* (Conington on 435-436).

13 *OLD s. v.* 5, e.g. Cic. *Phil.* 14.30 *ea* [sc. *praemia*] *quae promisimus studiose cumulata reddemus*.

14 Cf. Liv. 24.48.3 *ut in tempore et bene cumulatam gratiam referant*, but cf. Mart. 5.59.3 *quisquis magna dedit, voluit sibi magna remitti*.

15 A different kind of *veniam* had already played a role earlier in the book, at Anna's own suggestion: *tu modo posce deos veniam, sacrisque litatis / indulge hospitio* (50-51). The repetition at 436 is part of a pointed series of contrasts between the beginning of Dido's love story and its tragic conclusion, cf. p. 105.

16 See Scarcia 1984-91. In this context there may be a shade of the technical meaning *inane tempus* = χρόνος κενός = 'blank time' (*OLD s. v.* 8) as used in ancient discussions about music and metrics, e.g. Quint. 9.4.51: cf. M. L. West 1992: 266 nn. 30-31, and, below, n. 38.

17 Cf. 'mere time' (Clausen 2002: 93), all in J. Henry's footsteps (1873-92: 3.175).

18 'Poco tempo' (Canali), 'un momento di requie' (Scarcia), 'tempo solo' (Calzecchi Onesti), 'un moment, presque rien' (Perret; cf. Peerlkamp: 'quasi rem non magnam').

would not seek sexual intimacy (*sine officio coeundi*)[19]. It is not essential, at this stage, to enquire whether Dido is consciously dissimulating her hopes to revive the *coniugium antiquum* or is actually convinced that all hopes are to be abandoned, and is ready to resign herself to a final farewell. The fact, however, that she is deploying an argument Anna had already suggested as a way to delay **[65]** Aeneas' departure and thus creates a chance for their relationship to blossom is in itself revealing[20].

No intertextual models are usually invoked for Dido's request, yet a remarkably similar one plays a crucial role in a text to which this book of the *Aeneid* is indebted in many important respects. In Euripides, Creon orders Medea to go into exile ὡς τάχιστα (321)[21], but the woman reassures him of her good intentions and obedience, and begs for a short reprieve (340–342):

> μίαν με μεῖναι τήνδ᾽ ἔασον ἡμέραν
> καὶ ξυμπερᾶναι φροντίδ᾽ ᾗ φευξούμεθα,
> παισίν τ᾽ ἀφορμὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ...
>
> [Allow me to remain this one day and to complete my plans for exile and how I may provide for my children ...]

Creon reluctantly agrees (350–356)[22]:

> καὶ νῦν ὁρῶ μὲν ἐξαμαρτάνων, γύναι,
> ὅμως δὲ τεύξῃ τοῦδε. προυννέπω δέ σοι,
> εἴ σ᾽ ἡ ᾽πιοῦσα λαμπὰς ὄψεται θεοῦ
> καὶ παῖδας ἐντὸς τῆσδε τερμόνων χθονός,
> θανῇ· λέλεκται μῦθος ἀψευδὴς ὅδε.
> νῦν δ᾽, εἰ μένειν δεῖ, μίμν᾽ ἐφ᾽ ἡμέραν μίαν·
> οὐ γάρ τι δράσεις δεινὸν ὧν φόβος μ᾽ ἔχει.

19 Cf. La Cerda (*explicatio* ad 425-436): '[sc. *inane*] nam illud erit exigui commodi, cum caritura sim voluptate matrimonij', and Tilly's decorous translation (London 1968): 'free from passion'.

20 4.51-53 *indulge hospitio causasque innecte morandi, / dum pelago desaevit hiems et aquosus Orion, / quassataeque rates, dum non tractabile caelum*. Ovid will expand the point, see later p. 245/215.

21 Cf. also 274, 335.

22 Lines 355-356 are excised by Nauck, followed by several editors (a full list in Van Looy 1992: 126), including, recently, Diggle, but not Page, Van Looy (with reservations) and Mastronarde. A few editors condemn 356 but spare 355.

> [And now, though I see that I am making a serious mistake, nonetheless, woman, you shall have your request. But I warn you, if tomorrow's sun sees you and your children within the borders of this land, you will be put to death. I mean what I have said. Now stay, if stay you must, for one more day. You will not do the mischief I fear by then.]

Her request to Creon distinguishes Euripides' Medea both from her Apollonian counterpart and from some related characters such as Hypsipyle and Ariadne, and is essential to the development of her plot of revenge: it is precisely thanks to the short delay extracted from the king – the one day which dramatic conventions require for the unfolding of a tragic plot – that Medea can accomplish her plans, as she remarks in the monologue which follows (371–375):

> ὁ δ᾽ ἐς τοσοῦτον μωρίας ἀφίκετο
> ὥστ᾽, ἐξὸν αὐτῷ τἄμ᾽ ἐλεῖν βουλεύματα
> **[66]**
> γῆς ἐκβαλόντι, τήνδ᾽ ἐφῆκεν ἡμέραν
> μεῖναί μ᾽, ἐν ᾗ τρεῖς τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν νεκροὺς
> θήσω[23], πατέρα τε καὶ κόρην πόσιν τ᾽ ἐμόν. 375
>
> But he has reached such a pitch of folly that, while it lay in his power to check my plans by banishing me, he has permitted me to stay for this day, a day on which I shall make corpses of three of my enemies, the father, his daughter, and my husband.

Indeed a brief delay is all she needs: μείνασ᾽ οὖν ἔτι σμικρὸν χρόνον, | ἢν μέν τις ἡμῖν πύργος ἀσφαλὴς φανῇ | δόλῳ μέτειμι τόνδε καὶ σιγῇ φόνον 'And so I shall wait a short time yet, and if some citadel of rescue appears, I shall go about this murder by stealth.' (389–391)[24].

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23 Here Medea appears to be planning Jason's death as well (Mastronarde *ad loc.*), but if the future tense is seen as modal then a *suggestio falsi* rather than an outright false prediction may be involved (Collard 1988: 314 n. 10).

24 An alternative version of the Carthaginian myth of origins (Suda *s. v.* Φοινίκων ἐγκέφαλοι) also involved the request for 'a little time.' Stranded on the coast of Libya, the Phoenicians refugees ask the locals to welcome them νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν, which the latter interpret as 'just one day and one night', the former as 'night and day', i.e. 'forever': Scheid, Svenbro 1985: 336–337 (the ruse recurs in other Greek myths of foundation as well). Cf. n. 93 below.

Virgil's *tempus inane* is consistent with μίαν ... ἡμέραν 'one day' and σμικρὸν χρόνον 'a short time' (note for instance Conington's translation), but a further implication emerges through the intertextual model: *inane* conveys, with a different emphasis, the same reassurance implicit in Medea's insistence on μίαν 'one', the single most important element of her exchange with Creon. Thanks to her insistence, Creon himself is convinced that the short time he finally grants Medea will not be enough for her to commit any of the crimes he fears. In the light of this model, however, Dido's *inane* rather rings as an unrequested apology, almost a *Verneinung*: Medea's time has surely been anything but 'empty'[25]. Is it reasonable to suspect that Dido's request, too, is fraught with similar dangers?

Seneca in his *Medea* will make Creon's train of thought even more transparent (285–297)[26]:

ME. Per ego auspicatos regii thalami toros,
per spes futuras perque regnorum status,
Fortuna varia dubia quos agitat vice,
precor, brevem largire fugienti moram,
dum extrema natis mater infigo oscula,
fortasse moriens. CR. Fraudibus tempus petis.
ME. Quae fraus timeri tempore exiguo potest?
[67]
CR. Nullum ad nocendum *tempus angustum* est malis.
ME. *Parum*ne miserae *temporis* lacrimis negas?
CR. Etsi repugnat precibus infixus timor,
unus parando dabitur exilio *dies*.
ME. Nimis est, recidas aliquid ex isto licet;
et ipsa propero[27].

25 Heyne on 433: '*tempus inane* est, quo nil agitur' (quoting Val. Fl. 3.656 *has tolerare moras et inania tempora*).

26 For Ovid's reworking of the Virgilian scene in his *Heroides* see later, p. 244/214.

27 Medea's *nimis est* is also double-edged. She ostensibly reassures Creon that a day will be plenty for her to prepare her exile, and she is as eager to leave at this stage as he is to see her leave. But *nimis est*, taken in isolation and set off by the pause which follows, also means what it says – the time Creon has unguardedly granted her will undoubtedly be 'too much'.

[Medea: By the auspicious bed of this royal marriage, by your hopes for the future and by the condition of kingship, always buffeted by the vicissitudes of uncertain Fortune, I pray to you: generously grant a brief stay of exile, while I plant my last kisses on my children as their mother – perhaps a dying mother.
Creon: You are seeking time for treachery.
Medea: What fear of treachery can there be in so brief a time?
Creon: No time is too short for the wicked to do harm.
Medea: You refuse a wretched woman time that is insufficient even for tears?
Creon: Even though my rooted fear opposes your prayers, a single day will be granted you to prepare for exile.
Medea: It is too much, you can cut it down: I too am in haste.]

Indeed, Seneca amplifies the resonance of the *dies*-motif by having Medea reflect explicitly – twice – on its strategic importance, first at 399–400 (*segnis hic ibit dies*, / *tanto petitus ambitu*, *tanto datus?*), then more extensively at 420–425:

laxare certe tempus immitis fugae
genero licebat – liberis unus dies
datus est duobus. non queror tempus breve:
multum patebit. faciet hic faciet dies
quod nullus umquam taceat – invadam deos
et cuncta quatiam.

[Surely he had scope as son-in-law to postpone the moment of bitter exile; yet for two children a single day is granted. I do not complain about the short time: it will go far. Today – today will achieve what no tomorrow will fail to speak of. I shall attack the gods and shake the world.]

As he rewrites the tragedy of Medea in the form of a Virgilian cento heavily influenced by Seneca's play, Hosidius Geta will use Dido's words to express Medea's request for extra time (78–80): *non iam coniugium antiquum*, *quod prodidit*, *oro*: / *tempus inane peto*: *liceat subducere classem*; / *extremam hanc oro veniam*.

Ennius' *Medea exul*[28] probably contained a similar exchange between Medea and Creon. Although we cannot read the whole scene, lines 229–231 Jocelyn hark back to Medea's considerations at Eur. *Medea* 373–375, and show that this Medea, too, is fully aware that the day's delay foolishly accorded her is a formidable weapon for her *ira*[29]:

[68]

ille traversa mente mi hodie tradidit repagula
quibus ego iram omnem recludam atque illi perniciem dabo
mihi maerores, illi luctum, exitium illi, exilium mihi.

[He with misguided mind this day has put the keys into my hand wherewith I will unlock my utmost wrath and work his ruin; grief shall be my portion and sorrow his; mine exile, his extinction.]

2. Dido's request for a short reprieve has attracted almost universal sympathy, and critics have therefore proved unusually keen to take her words at face value, at least in this respect. All she asks for, after all, is a bit of 'empty time' with no obligations and no consequences for Aeneas' mission: *vis à vis* such an innocent demand his refusal appears even more hard-hearted and callous[30].

The sympathetic interpretation of *tempus inane* has encouraged critics to smooth out considerable difficulties in the analysis of Dido's speech even before we reach its tormented last line – famously 'the most difficult in Virgil' (Conington)[31], or at least 'an outstanding example of Virgilian mystery' (Austin)[32].

28 On the title of the play and the attribution of fragments see Jocelyn 1967: 342-350, especially 346, 348.

29 See Jocelyn 1967 *ad loc*. A detailed stylistic analysis of the fragment in Lennartz (1994) 212–238, with further bibliography.

30 In the economy of the plot as engineered by Juno and Venus at the beginning of the book (90–128) time is not altogether irrelevant; as Anna recommends in her first address to her sister she should create *causas … morandi* (51) to detain Aeneas.

31 A definition echoed in the title of Sabbadini 1900: 'Il verso più difficile dell'*Eneide* (IV 436)'.

32 So difficult and mysterious, indeed, that Peerlkamp and Gossrau could not countenance Virgilian authorship, and excised it alongside 435 (La Cerda, *explicatio* ad 425-436, mentions earlier opinions that *miserere sororis* was a gloss, to be deleted together with 436). Wagner, too, wonders (*ad loc*.) whether 436 should not be excised. Cf. Bellessort 1925: 115: 'Ce passage est probablement un de ceux que Virgile eût modifié s'il avait pu corriger son poème.'

Let us consider, first, *requiem spatiumque furori*, which rounds off, probably more as a predicate than an apposition, line 433 ('some empty time, which would be *requies et spatium* for my furor'). '*Spatium* alone would be difficult with *furori*, but *requiem spatiumque* combine to mean 'a resting-time', Austin shrewdly observes: he is not alone in acknowledging, then silencing, the difficulty. *Requiem spatiumque* may well be modelled on the more common *tempus et spatium*, but the latter does not contain any potential dissonance, because *tempus* and *spatium* neatly overlap (almost redundantly), whereas *requies* and *spatium* – effect and cause – do not. There is no ambiguity, for instance, in the nurse's recommendation to Clytemnestra, in Seneca's **[69]** *Agamemnon*, to take time before heeding her rage: *proin quidquid est, da tempus ac spatium tibi*: / *quod ratio non quit saepe sanavit mora* 'So whatever it is, give yourself time and space: delay often cures what reason cannot' (129–130), even if, interestingly, the queen seems far from convinced by this line of thought: tragic characters seldom live their lives according to Otto's *Sprichwörter*[33].

But in Virgil's line, as Paratore points out (*ad loc.*), the Latin words can have the desired sense of 'a resting-time' only if we allow that both *hysteron proteron* and *zeugma* are simultaneously at work: logically *spatium* must precede its result *requiem*, but, unlike *requiem* … *furori*, *spatium* … *furori* unlocks a rich seam of exegetical ambiguity. Translators and commentators generally iron out the problem by tacitly implying that the one correct interpretation of *spatium* is that of 'interval'[34]: 'a respite and breathing-space for my passion' (Conington); 'requie e intervallo al furore' (Canali); 'a breathing space for her passion' (Clausen); 'rest and respite for my passion' (Austin), 'pausa e pace al furore' (Calzecchi Onesti). Only a few strive to preserve the complexity of the Latin word-order – notably Perret: 'un peu de calme, quelques jours pour mon délire'[35]. Ovid allows for no

33 For further comparisons with the Seneca passage see Tarrant *ad loc*. and Otto 1890 *s. v. mora*. St. *Th*. 10.703-705 harks back to Virgil's line: *ne frena animo permitte calenti*, / *da spatium tenuemque moram, male cuncta ministrat* / *impetus*.

34 This meaning of *spatium* is rarer (*OLD s. v.* 9), and normally used with verbs which signal it.

35 It may be interesting to note that Mackail ('the last of Virgil's great Romantic critics': Quinn 1963: 31) and Day Lewis, who appear to be at least partially attuned to the potentially ominous implications of these lines, are both poets rather than, or more than, professional classicists. On Mackail (1859–1945), who trained as a classicist but became Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1906, cf. also S. J. Harrison 1990: 3.

ambiguities: *tempora parva peto, / dum freta mitescunt et amor, dum tempore et usu / fortiter edisco tristia posse pati* 'I ask for a little time – while the sea and my love grow calm, while through time and wont I learn the strength to endure my sorrows bravely' (*Her*. 7.178–180)[36]. Yet it is well-known that Virgil does exploit the 'momentary and evanescent' ambiguity produced by juxtaposing words which, once the full meaning of the sentence is clear, turn out to be otherwise syntactically connected[37].

[70] The problem is real. Assuming that *spatium* here means '(a stretch of) time' – as it normally does when followed by a dative –[38] a literal translation of the *iunctura* would have to be 'peace[,] and time for *furor*', a distinctly ambiguous and potentially disturbing meaning especially if we consider the pause after *requiem*[39]. We should not hasten to paper over this difficulty by 'decoding' the Latin words, but, rather, recognise the rewarding interpretive scenario opened up thanks to the double-edged meaning of *spatium furori* alongside *requiem furori*[40]. Again, it will not do to force an optimistic resolution by implying *leniendo* or the like, as, for instance, Day Lewis does as he translates: '… just time to give rein to despair and thus calm it'[41]. *Spatium furori* may also be interpreted as 'time for my *furor* to calm down', because ancient ethical theory (and common-sense advice) do point out that the best way to deflate anger and other strong emotions is to allow them to run their course for a while (obstacles can only intensify their strength, as Ovid points out in the case of Pentheus: *Met*. 3.566–71); but this is neither the only possible interpretation of Virgil's line, nor indeed the most straightforward.

A theoretical restatement of this type of advice is offered by Seneca at *de ira* 3.39. At first, *ira* cannot be contained: *primam iram non audebimus*

36 On the meaning of Virgil's *doceat dolere* and its difference *vis à vis* Ovid's *edisco pati* see later, p. 245/215.

37 Clausen 2002 (1987[1]): 43 (from which my quote is taken), 71-72, 77, cf. O'Hara 1997: 250–251.

38 *OLD s. v.* 10. Note, in connection with the use of *inane* discussed above, n. 16, that *spatium* is also used to denote 'a pause' in music (*OLD s. v.* 16).

39 Cf. for instance Valerius Flaccus 2.356: *et deus ipse moras spatiumque indulget amori*. The *deus* is Jupiter, the lovers Jason and Hypsipyle.

40 While it is natural to assume that Dido is talking here about her *furor*, her words may also be taken, in part, as a criticism of Aeneas' own *furor*, the cruel folly (see e.g. 4.309–311), as she sees it, of his hasty departure.

41 An early suggestion in La Cerda (*explicatio ad* 425-436): 'peto *requiem spatiumque*, non amoribus, non blanditiis, sed *furori* meo mitigando … Solet enim primo impetus esse furor, qui postea assuetudine est dolor'.

oratione mulcere: surda est et amens. Dabimus illi spatium (39.2); afterwards, *quies* will help to assuage anger (39.3 *initia morborum quies curat*): *omni arte requiem furori dabit* (39.4). Both Clytemnestra's reaction to the nurse's advice, and Seneca's reasoning in *de ira* make clear that 'giving time to *furor*' retains the more ominous sense of 'a time and space for my fury': things will definitely get worse before they **[71]** can get better, before *ratio* will eventually be in a position to reassert its control over passion. *Spatium* is the first step in the path to recovery, but it is also a time for anger to express itself without restraint, because there is no reasonable way to contain such an outburst of passion in its prime. But what can happen while furor is allowed space and time to spend itself?

3. Arguments about the meaning and implications of the ablative *morte*[42] at line 436 also date at least as far back as Servius[43]. Three closely connected issues are at stake: (i) the precise syntactical function of *morte* (instrumental, temporal, or both?)[44]; (ii) which type of death **[72]**

42 There is no need to emend *morte*, and attempts have in any case been discouraging. The least perverse proposal is probably the Delphin edition's *cumulatum* ('I will send him away with my death to crown and reward him' [Conington]), whose aggressive sarcasm is quite extreme (hence Klouček's *cumulatum munere mittam*). Ribbeck, not on form, proposed *monte* (Ribbeck 1866: 95: '[i]immo magnos conieci reginam promisisse montes auri argentique aliorumque praemiorum in tam exigui beneficii gratiam'); Schrader ventured *sorte*, which is too technical. Vivona 1898: 430-431 argues that Dido must have expressed the same feelings of her Ovidian counterpart at *Her*. 7.181, something along the lines of 's'ei mi concederà questo favore, mi salverà dalla morte', i.e. (tentatively) quam mihi cum dederit, tum ablata morte remittam. Other attempts are listed – and rejected – by Pease 1935: 361. Heinze 1915: 115 n. 38 interprets the transmitted text thus: 'I will reward it in good measure, even with my life,' while remarking that the meaning of Dido's 'obscure' words would have been clearer if the author had written *cumulatam vel morte remittam*, i.e. 'even in death.'

43 *Morte* plays an equally interesting role at 4.17 *postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit*, where Lyne 1989: 31 brilliantly shows that the ablative is at work with both *fefellit* and *deceptam*. The equation between death and deception, in itself plausible given the context, can also be seen as an early instance of a propensity to amalgamate heterogeneous categories which later grows to more alarming proportions, see later p. 236/206. On similar ambiguities created by ablatives in Virgil see Jackson Knight 1966: 264–265 and O'Hara 1997: 249–250.

44 La Cerda (*explicatio* ad 425-436), who reads *dederis*, recognizes that *morte* could mean either 'cum ipsa moriar' or 'si opus fuerit, moriar pro te', but does not suspect that suicide may be hinted at (though Wagner may have him in mind among those who '[d]e morte voluntaria ... haec accipiunt', and with whom he disagrees *ad loc.*). Forbiger[2] (1845-46) on 436 first explicitly remarks that *morte* could equally well be seen to refer to Dido's natural death, or to her suicide: 'Annam quidem haec de naturali morte intelligere vult soror, ipsa autem iam de caede sibi inferenda cogitat.'

is alluded to (natural or voluntary?); and (iii) who is expected to die (Dido alone, or others as well?).

Word order, context and Latinity make it natural to consider *morte* as an instrumental ablative. 'By her death', Dido would align herself to unlucky lovers such as Damon's anonymous sheperd in *Eclogue* 8[45], who, when he is spurned by Nysa, presents his death[46] as an *extremum ... munus* (*Ecl*. 8.60)[47]. The connection between Dido's and Damon's words is clearly flagged by *extremum hoc miserae det munus amanti* at line 429[48]. Her death would be a 'gift' to Aeneas, presumably because it would remove any remaining obstacle to his plans[49]. If this passive-aggressive threat were unequivocally perceptible, however, Anna would have cause to worry about Dido's suicidal plans. But with a reasonable amount of goodwill *morte* could be regarded as a less threatening

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The ambiguity between the instrumental and temporal meanings is recognized by several modern commentators (Conington, Page, Pease, Buscaroli, Williams), but denied by Austin. Sabbadini 1900 argues that the meaning shifted from the instrumental to the temporal in the context of Virgil's reshaping of the passage (see above n. 10). Paratore (on 436) and Cartault 1926: 324 privilege the instrumental meaning alone, but highlight (esp. Paratore) the ambiguity of the line. Recent discussions in Murgia 1987: 56–57 and esp. Casali 1999: 106–113.

45 As Servius (on 436) already pointed out.

46 The connection between *munus* and suicide is debated, see Clausen on *Ecl*. 8.60. The model is Theocritus, *Id*. 3.25–27 (with Hunter *ad loc*.); cf. [Th.] *Id*. 23.20–21.

47 The dialogue with *Eclogue* 8 is extensive. Shortly before his passive-aggressive threat, Damon devotes a stanza to Medea (the passage is complex and much discussed, see Coleman and Clausen *ad loc*.): *saevus Amor docuit natorum sanguine matrem / commaculare manus. crudelis tu quoque, mater. / crudelis mater magis, an puer improbus ille?* (47–50). *Saevus Amor* harks back to Ennius: *Medea animo aegro amore saevo saucia* (*Medea exul* 216 Jocelyn), which also stands behind the all-important opening line of Book 4 (mediated, there, via Cat. 64.249–250, but also looking at Apollonius' *Medea*, 3.286–287; see Clausen 2002: 75-76, and later, n. 327), while *improbus* is echoed at *Aen*. 4.412 (see later, p. 92 and n. 146). Also, *Ecl*. 8.64–109 describes a magic incantation closely mirrored in *Aen*. 4.506–521 (Faraone 1989; Scarcia 1991): see later.

48 A comparable train of thought is found in Apollonius' Medea, who would prefer to be slaughtered by Jason rather than be abandoned by him: her death – she points out bitterly – would come as 'due gratitude' (4.375 ἐπίηρα ... ἐοικότα) for all the help and love she has bestowed on him.

49 Servius' matter-of-fact reasoning – 'nam si eam odio habet restat ut eius morte laetetur' – resonates in Dryden's harsh translation (with *dederis*): 'If you in pity grant this one request, / My death shall glut the hatred of his breast.' Traglia 1983: 153 paraphrases 'mi conceda quest'ultimo favore, che gli restituirò ridandogli piena libertà con la mia morte.' A similar interpretation in Fairclough, Brown 1908 *ad loc*.: Dido would be planning to 'deliver him [sc. Aeneas] from her forever.'

indication of time[50]: **[73]** Dido would simply be promising that 'at her death' (at whatever time, and for whatever cause) she will gratefully reward Aeneas' *venia*[51]. These radically different messages have different addressees in sight. Anna, not for the first or the last time credited with a limited flair for lateral thinking, is not expected to surmise that 'at death' may point to an imminent future, let alone to pick up the *Eclogue* intertext. At some level, however, Dido must expect Aeneas to detect the desperate message lurking in her words, and – hopefully – be persuaded to reconsider his departure.

The absence of any explicit indication of whose death is meant with *morte*, however, gives Dido's words a threatening overtone consonant with the implication of the Euripidean intertext we have been discussing – and this is far from surprising at the conclusion of a speech whose very first line saw Aeneas metamorphosed from a cherished *hospes* (4.10)[52] into a haughty *hostis*[53]. DServius (on 436) reports that **[74]** the potentially

50 A clear-cut temporal use of *morte* without an adjective or genitive is hard to parallel even in archaic authors. Already Plautus favours *in morte* (Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr 147–148); at *Miles* 707 *mea bona mea morti cognatis didam* (Lindsay), where in any case *mea* qualifies *morte*, Leo adopts Lindemann's emendation *mea bona in morte*, quoting as parallels *Men*. 411 and Cic. *Caec*. 10. Cf. also Bennett 1914: 381. But occasionally *morte* can be regarded as a borderline case between causal and temporal. Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr 132 quote Lucil. 755-756 M. *morte huic transmisit suam / scolen*, to which one could add Ter. *Andria* 799 *eius morte ea ad me lege redierunt bona*, and Virg. *Aen*. 3.333-334 *morte Neoptolemi regnorum reddita cessit / pars Heleno* (Horsfall *ad loc*.: 'abl. either causal [...] or perhaps of time, as used by V. with words not themselves of any temporal force; cf. 629 [*discrimine tanto*], 1.672 *tanto cardine rerum*, 4.502 *aut graviora timet quam morte Sychaei*', with ref. to Antoine 1882: 189 ss., 232 s.).

51 There is no need, and no way, to pin down what the queen may specifically have in mind as a reward. Murgia 1987: 56, reading *dederis*, thinks, along established lines, of 'an inheritance, and probably succession as queen.' Casali 1999: 111–112 and 118, with *dederit*, believes that Dido is offering a retraction of her curse (cf. 4.380-384), more favourable travel conditions, and, by extension, a future of peace between Romans and Carthaginians.

52 On Aeneas as *hospes* see Gibson 1999.

53 The emphatic *hostis* at 424 could well be gesturing towards Euripides' *Medea* and its pervasive use of ἐχθρός. Medea consistently regards Jason and his family as her enemies (278, 383, 734, 750, 765, 767, [782], 797, 1050, 1060; note the concentration in Medea's speech at 764-810), whom she must conquer (374, 765, 921). Medea sees herself as an equal to Jason, who by his betrayal has violated the social norms regulating relations among ξένοι: 'Medea thus takes on the traits of the insulted chieftain' (Mastronarde 2002: 9 and on 383). Jason is indeed ἔχθιστος (467; he will return the compliment at 1323). Aegeus and the Nurse share her point of view as well as her vocabulary (95, 744). The significance of the motif is well explained by Medea herself at 506–508 – Jason's actions have caused an inversion of normal

aggressive meaning of *morte* taken as an instrumental had been spotted by early critics: 'alii ita intellegunt: 'reddam illi gratiam, occidam illum'; nam alibi ait (600) *non potui abreptum divellere corpus?* sed hoc totum sorori dicit.' Very few modern interpreters acknowledge that 'by death' at line 436 could also be read as a threat to Aeneas[54], and those who do hasten to rule out the possibility, perhaps because they implicitly share Mackail's warning that 'it would be quite out of place to make [Dido] end this piteous appeal on a note of savage irony'[55]. Not DServius, however, who precisely at this stage in his explanation adds the intriguing remark 'an perplexe locuta est, *ut solent loqui mali aliquid molientes?*' (my emphasis)[56].

This is plainly a case in which the decision of where to stop in the search for 'further voices' is shaped by our exegetical expectations[57]. If Dido is to be the forlorn victim of Aeneas' callousness, she cannot at this stage, as she begs for a short delay, be allowed to nurture any violent thoughts against the man she is still desperately trying to hold on to. But Austin misses the point when he thinks that expanding the reach of *morte* to include Aeneas as a victim would represent Mackail's 'note of savage irony.' First of all, this possible interpretation should not be seen as an alternative, but as an addition to the passive-aggressive meaning of *morte* which would foreshadow Dido's suicide. Secondly – and this is the essential point – there is no question of Dido being conscious of the threat against Aeneas which, try as we might, **[75]** we simply cannot write out of *morte*. No: Dido cannot be fully aware at this stage of the violent impulses she feels against Aeneas, and which she will voice much later, just as she cannot (consciously) know that her request for *tempus inane* connects her with an ominous intertextual model.

Awareness of the Euripidean intertext – and a willingness to explore

affective relations, and as a consequence she has become 'an enemy to my own kin ... and made foes of those I ought not to have armed.' The Nurse had analysed the situation along similar lines early in the prologue: νῦν δ᾽ ἐχθρὰ πάντα, καὶ νοσεῖ τὰ φίλτατα 'But now all is enmity, and closest ties are diseased' (16).

54 Murgia 1987: 56, *contra* Casali 1999: 113 n. 22.

55 Mackail 1930: 151, endorsed by Austin *ad loc*.

56 An intuition shared by a master of stylistic analysis and – in his youth – a disciple of Freud, Leo Spitzer: 'To every emotion, that is, to every distancing from our normal psychological state, corresponds, in the field of expression, a distancing from normal linguistic usage; and, conversely, [...] a distancing from usual language is a sign of an unusual psychological state.' (Spitzer 1951: I.4). Riffaterre 1987, especially 371-374, restates the principle in explicitly psychoanalytic terms.

57 Cf. D. P. Fowler 1997: 25 = 2000: 127–128, quoted in the heading.

the meaning of *morte* to the full – thus add a crucial layer of signification to Dido's words. We therefore have (i) the quasi-temporal, reassuring meaning 'at [my] death', which is intended to deceive Anna and succeeds in doing so because it can be understood to refer to a form of future material gratitude towards Aeneas; (ii) a passive-aggressive meaning – 'my suicide will be Aeneas' recompense,' which Anna is not expected to detect, but – arguably – a well-read Aeneas is; and finally, (iii) a latent aggressive meaning: Dido's words imply a possible revenge against Aeneas, who will be 'recompensed with *his own* death' for his cruel treatment of Dido. This last meaning is also activated by the intertextual memory, but is not supposed to be detected by either Anna or Aeneas, in case it results in the failure of Dido's request to see her lover. We will return to this particular issue[58].

4. The variant reading *cumulata* is known to Servius (he does not endorse it)[59] and read in the Mediceus, but has not been very popular among modern editors and critics, if nothing else because it can *prima facie* be dismissed as an haplography[60]. It was championed by Heinsius (followed by Burman), who objected to the repetition of **[76]** *-am*, but offered no comments about its meaning. It was also initially preferred by Henry[61], who takes *cumulata morte* to signify – metaphorically –[62] 'a

58 Note a comparable plurality of interpretive levels in Medea's statement at 341, where ᾗ φευξούμεθα can mean both 'by what road we shall go into exile,' 'in what manner we shall go into exile,' and 'in what manner we shall live in exile': 'Creon is to understand the first and third, the audience may also hear the second' (Mastronarde on 341).

59 Servius on 436: 'male quidam legunt *quam mihi cum dederit* (id est Aeneas) *cumulata morte remittam*, et volunt intellegi 'acceptum ab illo beneficium mea morte cumulabo et sic relinquam'', an explanation which actually implies *cumulatam* (Sabbadini 1930, apparatus ad 436). Servius' explanation may be at the root of La Cerda's insertion of *relinquam* in the text instead of *remittam*.

60 Sabbadini 1900. Murgia 1987 and Casali 1999 do not discuss the relative merits of the two readings.

61 In 1851, during a visit to Leipzig (J. Henry 1853: ix-x), Henry shares his interpretation with Forbiger, who records it in Forbiger[3] 1852, its first public mention. Henry subsequently discusses it himself in J. Henry 1853: 61-66 and 1857: 260–261. Forbiger[4] 1872-75 mentions both Henry's original interpretation, and the fact that he has withdrawn it, 'ut, quid nunc de eo statuat, nesciam.' Conington[3] 1876 also discusses Henry's reading (finding it 'absolutely impossible'), while Conington-Nettleship[4] 1884, appearing after the publication of vol. 2 of *Aeneidea* in 1878 (J. Henry 1873-92), drops the reference altogether.

62 J. Henry 1853: 64: 'cumulata' is added to 'mors', not merely to heighten the expression, but to place it beyond doubt that 'mors' is taken, not in its literal, but in

state of misery exceeding death,' and interprets lines 435–436 as follows: 'I will remit (cease to trouble him with my love) in accumulated death, i.e. in a condition worse than death' (for the expression he compares – *e contrario* – St. *Th*. 11.581 *mors imperfecta*)[63]. But Henry subsequently[64] changed his mind, opting for *cumulatam* and making no mention of his earlier preference. However, Forbiger's summary of Henry's interpretation – 'mors quasi multiplex' – probably lies behind Pascoli's translation of *cumulata morte*[65] as 'con una morte moltiplicata'[66] – Dido pictures herself dying a thousand times over once Aeneas will have left again (as she fears) after granting her the small delay she is desperately seeking[67]. Although Henry and Pascoli both insist on the metaphorical value of **[77]** *mors*, and thus refer it exclusively to Dido's terminal sadness, Pascoli's translation comes tantalisingly close to an interpretation of *cumulata morte* – 'with abundant death' – which would substantially increase the risk of reading in Dido's word an unwelcome 'note of savage irony.' The problem, therefore, is not, as Pease would have it, that *cumulata* has 'no very good meaning'[68], but that such a meaning would not easily square with the common assumption that Dido's speech to Anna is humble and resigned.

Alternatively, *cumulata morte* could also be an ablative absolute[69].

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its metaphorical, sense.'

63 Snijder 1972 – apparently unaware of Henry and Pascoli – accepts *cumulata* and interprets *morte* as 'a dying away, mortification' of Dido's love for Aeneas, who should therefore feel free to linger in Carthage without any fear that their relationship might resume.

64 J. Henry 1873-92: 745-748.

65 '[L]ezione del Mediceo, la vera': Pascoli 1892 *ad loc*.

66 Thus, incidentally, supporting Traina's 1989: 94 intimation that Pascoli must have used Forbiger.

67 'La frase *cumulata morte* è volutamente equivoca: deve valere per Anna: – alla mia morte, quando ne sarà giunta l'ora… –. Ma Didone dentro sé intende: – con morire non una volta sola, ma più, con una morte moltiplicata –, perché quel tempo che Didone chiede, non farà se non irritare la sua passione e accrescere il dolore per la necessaria partenza, che ogni giorno, pensandola nel futuro, vedrà in atto di avvenire nel presente.' Anna, on the other hand, will simply interpret *cumulata morte* as 'alla mia morte, quando ne sarà giunta l'ora', taking *cumulata* in the sense of *plena*, *perfecta*, *matura* (cf. e.g. Virg. *Aen*. 6.745 *perfecto temporis orbe*).

68 Pease on 436.

69 For comparable expressions cf. Liv. 22.2.8 *cumulatis sarcinis*; Colum. 10.152 *cumulatis … glebis*; Curt. 6.6.29 *stipitibus cumulatis* ('ammucchiando tronchi su tronchi', trad. Gargiulo). Cf. also Luc. 8.729 *non pretiosa petit cumulato ture sepulchra*.

Taking *cumulare* in the sense of 'coacervare'[70] ('with death piled up high,' 'with accumulated death')[71], it would conjure up a striking visual image which would further magnify the ambiguity of the context, especially if we consider *mors* here as *abstractum pro concreto* for 'corpse.' This use is safely attested in poetry before and after Virgil[72]. Although there are no direct Virgilian parallels for it, *mors* has the material sense of 'gore' at *Aen*. 9.348 (*multa morte recepit*), where Servius paraphrases 'cum multo cruore'[73]; on the other hand, Virgil presents several instances of *funus* = 'corpse'[74].

Dido's *cumulata morte* would evoke an image of extensive death and destruction for which Lucretius offers a significant model in his description of the carnage provoked by the plague. At a climactic **[78]** point in the final narrative of *De rerum natura*, the disease spreads without hindrance among humans and animals alike, and mutual contagion *cumulabat funere funus* (6.1238)[75]. (Note, incidentally, that Dido's love had been considered a *pestis* by Juno as early as 4.90). A similar image is found in Lucretius 3.70–71, where he describes the depths of depravation to which men can sink in their senseless quest for riches and power: *sanguine civili rem conflant divitiasque / conduplicant avidi*, *caedem caede accumulantes* 'they amass wealth by civil bloodshed and greedily multiply riches, piling murder upon murder'[76].

70 *ThLL* 4.1383.21ff.

71 An interpretation entertained but quickly rejected by both Pease and Mackail. La Penna 1971: 458 also rejects *cumulata morte* ('aggiungendovisi la morte').

72 Cat. 64.362, Prop. 2.13.22, Manil. 4.665. Cf. also Cic. *Cluent*. 201, *Sest*. 83, *Mil*. 86, and *ThLL* VIII.1504.41 ff., with Hagendahl 1936: 337–338 and Hofmann, Szantyr 1965: 2.749.

73 Hardie *ad loc*. suggests that Virgil's 'bold use' might have been eased by the analogy with Gk. φόνος, both 'slaughter' and 'gore.'

74 *Aen*. 2.59, 6.150, 6.510, 9.491. Other instances in Cat., Prop., Ov., Sen. trag., Luc. etc. (*ThLL* VI.1605.36 ff.). Both *mors* and *funus* are used in this sense because the word cadaver was considered unsuitable for poetry: Norden on *Aen*. 6.150, Axelson 1945: 49, and P. G. Fowler 1983: 547–548. The influence of Gk. θάνατος must also have been at work. Note also that at Eur. *Med*. 374 νεκρός = 'corpse': 'make three of my enemies into corpses' (Mastronarde *ad loc*.).

75 P. G. Fowler 1983: 548: '*cumulare*, although common in an extended meaning, strongly suggests a physical heap,' as explicitly brought out 6.1262–1263 *quo magis aestu / confertos ita acervatim mors accumulabat*. The image may have influenced Virg. *Georg*. 3.556–557 *iamque catervatim dat stragem* [sc. *Tisiphone*] *atque aggerat ipsis / in stabulis turpi dilapsa cadavera*.

76 On the specific form of this and similar expression cf. Landgraf 1888: 162.

Here *funus* is used in the concrete sense of 'corpse,' as in Liv. 26.41.8 (*ut aliud super aliud cumularetur funus*) but the author of *Bellum Hispaniense* will conflate the Lucretian imagery and the concrete use of *mors* in a related passage with distinctive poetic overtones[77]: *non solum morti mortem aggerabant*, *sed tumulos tumulis exaequabant* (5.6). Apart from the influence of Lucretius, a possible Ennian model has been suggested[78]: indeed the image of heaped corpses retains a strong expressionistic flavour which would not sound out of place in the *Annales*, perhaps in a context similar to Acc. *trag*. 317 R.^{2} = 138 Dangel *nec perdolescit fligi socios*, *morte campos contegi*, which also depicts a large-scale massacre and features *mors* in the sense of 'corpse'[79].

After Virgil[80], the use of *cumulare* in contexts describing mass slaughter remains productive[81], for instance in Lucan (4.570–571 *strage* **[79]** *cruenta ... cumulata ratis*) and Statius (*Theb*. 10.655 *exanimes circum cumulantur acervi*), but especially in Silius, where, of course, we contemplate the eventual outcome of the rift between Carthaginians and Rome: *et iam corporibus cumulatus creverat agger* (1.418), *cumulantur acervo* / *labentum* (14.609: in the context of a plague), and *cumulatam strage virorum* (15.406, with *cumulatam* in the same position as in *Aen*. 4.436)[82]. Although a different sense of the verb is implied, Medea's words at Sen. *Med*. 147 are also worth mentioning: *alto cinere cumulabo domum*[83]. In keeping with the ominous implications of *morte*, *cumulata morte* would graphically evoke – with the support of impressive and memorable models – the spectre of extensive slaughter. Mass funeral pyres, corpses accumulated one on top of the other, would

77 See the detailed analysis by Pascucci 1965: 173–174 and Diouron 1999: 63.

78 Pascucci 1965: 174. On other possible Ennian reminiscences see later nn. 101 and 104.

79 The only pre-I century b. C. attestation of *cumulo*, however, is from a fragment by Caecilius Statius (230 R.^{2}) quoted by Cicero (*Cael*. 73): *nunc meum cor cumulatur ira* (a stern old man is talking). Cf. Virg. *Aen*. 4.197 *aggerat iras*.

80 Where a comparable image can be found at *Aen*. 11.207: *confusaeque ingentem caedis acervum*.

81 The negative use of *cumulo* to denote the piling up of evils seems also to be borne out by other passages, such as Cic. *Verr*. 3.85: *haec tam parva civitas … cumulata aliis tuis maioribus iniuriis*, or *Cat*. 1.14 *nonne etiam incredibili scelere hoc scelus cumulavisti?*

82 Silius displays a remarkable interest in the creative potential afforded by overblown images of masses of bodies. See for instance 8.659–660 *iam stragis acervis* / *deficiunt campi*, or (even better) 8.668–669 *pons ecce cadentum* / *corporibus struitur*.

83 For other possible connections between the play and *Aen*. 4 see later, p. 199–200/84.

be a suitable form of revenge on the part of the queen who has been horribly wronged, and, shortly later, she will be sorry that she has not inflicted such a punishment on Aeneas, his son, his companions and his descendants (600–602)[84]. The 'piling up' of corpses evoked by *cumulata morte* is conveyed, in Euripides, by the rhythm and structure of the line where Medea envisages multiple homicides (374–375: τρεῖς τῶν [80] ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν νεκροὺς | θήσω, πατέρα τε καὶ κόρην πόσιν τ᾽ ἐμόν 'I shall make corpses of three of my enemies, the father, his daughter, and my husband')[85]; in Ennius, a similar effect is reached through the careful balancing of symmetrical elements, repetition and assonance[86]; finally, in Virgil, by the anaphoras at lines 600–601 and 605–606, where Dido regrets that she has not killed Aeneas, his son and his companions, and *memet super ipsa dedissem* (606) directly conveys the relevant spatial detail.

5. While *cumulata* deserves more attention than it normally attracts, the accusative *cumulatam* is doubtless the correct reading at line 436, since the image of devastation which *cumulata morte* conjures up could not – of course – be explicitly voiced at this stage, or Dido's request would collapse. But neither can *cumulatam* ever fully dispel the shadow of *cumulata* and its threatening implications. The phonetic texture of line

84 Cf. also 612-620. Of course the Trojans' instinctive feeling as they approached Carthage's shores was a deep-seated (and seemingly justified) fear: only divine intervention will cause their hosts to set aside their *ferocia* / … *corda* (1.302-303), but danger is always lurking beneath the surface (cf. e.g. 1.539–540), and to Jupiter they remain 'an enemy people' (4.235): Schiesaro 2005: 91-93; cf. Nelis 2001: 71-73. Note the gloomy characterization (*pace* Austin's insistence [on 1.159] on 'peace and safety') of the natural harbour the Trojans find upon their arrival near Carthage, which displays the typical features and colours of *loca horrida*, much as it offers, for the time being, a welcome respite. Mention of the Nymphs, too, is not entirely reassuring, given their later role in Dido's 'wedding' (see below p. 223–24/108 on the deceptive stillness of water see later n. 122), and the fact that later in the tradition (Ovid and Silius) Anna will have to metamorphose into a nymph in order to escape Lavinia's revenge (see later pp. 211–14/96–99) thus bringing to a close the story of the Carthaginian sisters. Anna's new abode as described by Silius (8.197–198) echoes 1.167–168. Ovid, characteristically, will tease out the negative connotation of the scenery by echoing it as a backdrop for Ino's suicide at *Met*. 4.525-527. The emphasis on details such as overhanging rocks and great heights inject a Bacchic flavour in the description – both Dido and Ino will turn into 'Bacchae.'

85 Note also that νεκρούς is a predicate: 'make three of my enemies into corpses' (Mastronarde on 374).

86 Cf. Lennartz 1994: 213–238, esp. 218–220.

436 is striking, and has rightly attracted attention: the number of *m* is so large that Highet[87] suggests it may try to replicate Dido's sobs as she speaks[88]. As we hear the line (indeed, to a certain extent, even as we read it) the difference between CUMULATAMORTE and CUMULATAMMORTE effectively disappears[89]: word-order and phonetic effects conspire to make *cumulata morte* perceptible as a censored thought inescapably embedded within the accusative *cumulatam* in agreement with *veniam*[90]. Even as we print *cumulatam*, the text still **[81]** enables us to glimpse the flash of revengeful destruction in Dido's request, and an underlying set of emotions of which Dido is as yet unaware.

Dido's repressed emotions emerge in the shape of an allusion to Medea's deceitfully meek request and in an image of mass death which the reader is allowed to overhear, but which remains safely unavailable to the characters involved. We cannot establish for sure at what level of consciousness Dido nurtures the feelings of revenge which seep through her words. The possibility that 433–436 are a fully-fledged *Trugrede* intended to bring Aeneas back and kill him cannot be unequivocally discounted, but neither can her continuing passion. Indeed, her insistent denial at 431–432 (*non … oro, / nec …*) is a transparent vehicle for voicing her unsuppressed desire to return to the *coniugium antiquum* and keep Aeneas at Carthage, and it would be hard to dismiss it as a rhetorical ploy. As ever in Virgil's poem, Dido is a character of staggering emotional intensity and complexity, and precisely because of its depth her love for Aeneas can leave room, if betrayed, for violent revenge.

87 Highet 1972: 137.

88 Note the 'perceptible alliteration' of *m* (as well as *p*) in Euripides' Medea speech at 340-347, 'perhaps expressive of [her] earnest tone' (Mastronarde *ad loc.*). The very name 'Medea' frequently favours alliterative patterns in *m*, notably in Seneca's tragedy (Traina 1981: 123–129).

89 Cf. Allen 1978: 31. The difference in pronunciation between single and double consonants does not prevent puns: Ahl 1985: 57. Sabbadini 1900 argues that the sequence caused the 'errore di copiatura' *cumulata*.

90 Romans were fully attuned to the existence of 'acoustic intratexts' (Schork's 1996 label), as attested – e.g. – by the famous wordplay on *cauneas* = *cave ne eas* reported by Cic. *div*. 2.84. See later n. 233. In general, see Ahl 1985 for Latin, and the pioneering work of Silk 1974: 173–193 on 'aural interaction' in Greek (esp. 191–193 on 'aural suggestion', a category which is relevant here). On Virgil cf. also Simonetti Abbolito 1995: 178–181.

6. Instead of doubling his efforts to leave Carthage, Aeneas, even if *certus eundi* (554), falls asleep, and is visited by Mercury, who admonishes him to hasten his preparations because he is surrounded by dangers (560–570)[91]:

> 'nate dea, potes hoc sub casu ducere somnos,
> nec quae te circum stent deinde pericula cernis,
> demens, nec Zephyros audis spirare secundos?
> illa dolos dirumque nefas in pectore versat,
> certa mori, variosque irarum concitat aestus.
> non fugis hinc praeceps, dum praecipitare potestas?[92] 565
> iam mare turbari trabibus saevasque videbis
> conlucere faces, iam fervere litora flammis,
> **[82]**
> si te his attigerit terris Aurora morantem.
> heia age, rumpe moras. varium et mutabile semper
> femina.'
>
> ['Goddess-born, when such hazard threatens, can you still slumber? Do you not see the perils that from henceforth hem you in, madman? Do you not hear the kindly breezes blowing? She, resolved on death, revolves in her heart fell craft and crime, and awakens the swirling surge of passion. Will you not flee hence in haste, while hasty flight is possible? Soon you will see the waters a welter of timbers, see fierce brands ablaze, and soon the shore flashing with flames, if dawn finds you lingering in these lands. Up then, break off delay! A fickle and changeful thing is woman ever.']

Mercury's second appearance in the book has often been criticised both for its supposed structural irrelevance and for unjustifiedly attributing to Dido violent thoughts of revenge, although *dolos dirumque nefas* could

91 E. L. Harrison 1982 and Feeney 1998 provide valuable readings of this rather neglected episode.

92 This line is fairly close to Eur. *Med*. 372; note, incidentally, the syntactical similarity between the construction *potestas* + inf. and the Greek accusative absolute ἐξόν + inf.

easily be seen as a fitting anticipation of (at least)[93] her suicide plans[94], and the images of turmoil conveyed by *mare turbari trabibus* and *conlucere faces* read as Mercury's restatement of Dido's explicit threat at 382–387. Indeed, as the Trojans at sea glimpse from a distance the flames of Dido's funeral pyre (a *tantus ... ignis* which appears to be engulfing the city's *moenia*) they are filled with dark fears: *notum ... furens quid femina possit* (5.6)[95]. And yet **[83]** 'how far [Dido] was from such a plot may be judged from her unhappy gropings in 534f.' remarks Austin, who then proceeds to state that Mercury is simply lying, and Dido 'has no plots against [Aeneas] to do him personal injury'[96]. The situation is arguably

93 Dido's association with *dolus* should not surprise. Even if we discount any ominous implication, she was after all renowned for the ingenious way in which she acquired Carthage's land: in Medieval English the common noun 'dido' means, inter alia, 'trick' (Bono, Tessitore 1998: 2-3). Scheid, Svenbro 1985: 337 argue that Dido's alternative name Elissa, to be connected with ἐλίσσειν 'to deceive' (as in Eur. *Or*. 889–894, A.R. 1.463), points to a Greco-Roman origin for the foundation myth of Carthage (but see n. 24 for an alternative etymology). Note that Gk. Μήδεια is also traced to the Indo-European stem **med*, of both μέδω and μήδομαι whose semantic spectrum includes 'to think', 'to plot', and 'to treat with magic rites' (cf. Homeric μήδεα 'thoughts, designs'), and which is in turn connected with the stem **me* of μῆτις: see Chantraine 1968: 1959–60 s. v. *medeor*, and Usener 1948: 160–163. On Roman stereotypes about *fides Punica* see Horsfall 1973-74, Prandi 1979, Hexter 1992: 345-347; on Medea as an archetype for cunning and magic prowess, and the characterization of Corinth, her home and Sisyphus', as the home of *sophismata* (as in Pind. *Ol*. 13.52-56) see Detienne, Vernant 1974: 176–179.

94 Moles 1987: 159: 'Mercury's sexist views and warning that Dido is dangerous are accurate.'

95 Mercury foresees that unless Aeneas departs forthwith the Carthaginians will pursue the Trojan ships (with *trabibus* = 'ships' or 'oars'), set fire to any of them still ashore, and possibly (Pease) hurl *faces* against their ships. The sequence is somewhat confused, thus anticipating Dido's irate and incoherent remarks at 592-594: *non arma expedient totaque ex urbe sequentur, / diripientque rates alii navalibus? ite, / ferte citi flammas, date tela, impellite remos!* It is in any case significant that the destruction of the ships by fire is envisaged here as well, after being first mentioned as early as 1.525 (*prohibe infandos a navibus ignes*). It will actually occur in Book 5, where Bacchic, Dido-like Trojan women do in fact set fire to the fleet (659–666: note that 666 *respiciunt atram in nimbo volitare favillam* echoes 5.3-4 *moenia respiciens* [sc. Aeneas], *quae iam infelicis Elissae / conlucent flammis*, with *conlucent* taken up in turn from 4.567 *conlucere*). The Bacchic connotation of the scene is guaranteed by Ascanius' words (672-673) *en, ego vester / Ascanius!*, a luckier (if seemingly unnoticed) take on Eur. *Ba*. 1118–1119 Ἐγώ τοι, μῆτερ, εἰμί, παῖς σέθεν | Πενθεύς, ὃν ἔτεκες ἐν δόμοις Ἐχίονος 'It's me, mother, Pentheus, the son you bore in Echion's house!' (the word order is noteworthy).

96 Austin on 563, cf. Feeney 1998: 122 on Mercury's characterisation as 'the archetypal liar.' For other negative opinions, and the suggestion that the appearance is not real, but just a figment of Aeneas' imagination (as argued e.g. by Steiner 1966: 53), see E. L. Harrison 1982: 29–30. Pease, however, believes 'the spirit already shown in

more complicated. At a structural level, for instance, E. L. Harrison has persuasively shown that Mercury's double intervention is modelled on *Iliad* 24, and the Roman god displays the same degree of independent initiative which characterises his Greek counterpart[97]. In the *Iliad*, Hermes first escorts Priam on his mission to Achilles (24.334–338), but once the king falls asleep in the Greek camp he returns a second time, appears to Priam in his sleep, and warns him that he is surrounded by dangerous enemies (24.679–688). According to Mercury, Aeneas, too, has failed to comprehend fully the violence of Dido's feelings and their destructive (and self-destructive) potential, and has therefore taken her harsh words at 381–386 as a temporary emotional outburst which should not be taken at face value. The time elapsing between Aeneas' acceptance of Mercury's initial order, and his actual departure after the god's second intervention is crucial to the unfolding of Dido's tragedy, and is crucially characterised as 'borrowed time' fraught with anxiety[98]. Nor is Mercury's second message ideologically vacuous: as a Jupiter-endorsed purveyor of Logos the god's appearance marks the stark contrast between the divine and human views of the events taking place at Carthage[99].

[84] Within this Homer-inspired narrative framework, an Euripidean intertext plays a decisive role once more: Mercury's *si te his terris Aurora morantem* (568) unequivocally reflects Euripides *Medea* 352–354[100], εἴ σ' ἡ ᾽πιοῦσα λαμπὰς ὄψεται θεοῦ | καὶ παῖδας ἐντὸς τῆσδε τερμόνων χθονός, | θανῇ 'if tomorrow's sun sees you and your children within the borders of this land, you will be put to death', possibly via Ennius' *si te secundo lumine hic offendero moriere*[101]. This allusion has been noticed by critics

4, 384- 386, and, still more, the rage soon to burst out […] go far to explain it' (in a similar vein cf. Conington on 563, and Paratore on 563). If Mercury is indeed a figment of his imagination, it would appear that Aeneas has subconsciously grasped the menace lurking in Dido's words.

97 E. L. Harrison 1982: 12–15; 32.

98 E. L. Harrison 1982: 23–24 is very good on the significance of Aeneas' belated departure.

99 Feeney 1998: especially 115–116.

100 The parallel was pointed out by De La Cerda, followed only by Conington, Forbiger, Buscaroli and Pease. Paratore points rather to Hom. *Il*. 18.268–269 (also mentioned by De La Cerda), which may well be in the background to Euripides' line.

101 This line, quoted by Cic. *Rab. Post*. 29 as the typical utterance of an imperious king, was assigned to Ennius' *Medea* by Scaliger, followed by Vahlen[2] (264–265) and Ribbeck (224–225 R.[2]), but not by Jocelyn 1967: 349, who argues that it could belong

since La Cerda, but regarded as an inert verbal borrowing (or, in any event, a non-threatening intertext). Once we appreciate the similarities between Dido's and Medea's requests, however, we must infer that Mercury's almost verbatim repetition of Creon's words acquires a much more substantial significance: not only does it valorise in retrospect the presence of the Euripidean intertext at 433–436, but it also confirms to Aeneas that Dido is liable to turn into a revengeful Medea dominated by *ira*. Seneca's own version of the scene (*Medea* 297–299) is – again – close to the Euripidean model and its earlier Latin incarnations[102]:

> capite supplicium lues,
> clarum priusquam Phoebus attollat diem
> nisi cedis Isthmo.
>
> [You will be punished by death if you do not leave the Isthmus before Phoebus raises the bright day.]

We are now in a position better to understand the harsh tone of Mercury's words. Aeneas has conspicuously failed to grasp the full meaning of Dido's message, and most importantly the intertextual reference which would have revealed its threatening potential. Aeneas, **[85]** clearly, hasn't read Euripides' *Medea*[103], and is therefore as *demens* (562) as the king, who, in Medea's own words, had 'come to such a degree of folly' (371) that he granted her the delay she was craving because he had failed to comprehend what was at stake[104].

Mercury's statement that Dido *dolos dirumque nefas in pectore versat* (563)[105] is justified by his (unsurprising) superior awareness of the

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to any number of Republican plays. The line, however, does appear to fit unusually well at this juncture in Ennius' play (Jocelyn's reservations are based mostly on issues of transmission). An Ennian flavour could possibly be perceived in the rare use of *trabes* in the sense of 'ships' at line 566 (Austin *ad loc*. with bibliography), one of only two such occurrences in Virgil (cf. *Aen*. 3.191), which is first found in *Medea exul* 208–209 Jocelyn: *utinam ne in nemore Pelio securibus / caesa accidisset abiegna ad terram trabes* (*Ann*. 616 V.² = spur. 9 Sk. may be spurious).

102 La Cerda on 568 referring to Ennius and Seneca: 'uterque Euripidi haesit.' Hosidius Geta's centoneary *Medea* restores Virgil's line to Creon (102).

103 To reverse Wilamowitz' famous dictum about Seneca's own Medea (1919: 3.162).

104 Cf. also Ennius' *traversa mente* at 229 Jocelyn.

105 Cf. Creon's reaction to Medea's request in Eur. *Med*. 316–317: λέγεις ἀκοῦσαι μαλθάκ', ἀλλ' ἔσω φρενῶν | ὀρρωδία μοι μή τι βουλεύῃς κακόν 'Your words are soothing to listen to, but I am afraid that in your heart you are plotting some harm'.

complexity of Dido's emotions and mental processes[106]. Even if the queen is not yet conscious of her vengeful feelings, her words at 435–436 open a window onto an array of conflicting impulses: she is resigned to her fate and yet desires one last chance to revive the relationship with Aeneas; she is ready to threaten suicide to manipulate him, but she also entertains in earnest the thought of killing herself; she begs for 'just a bit of time' yet is also drawn to the example of Euripides' irate Medea, even if it will take some more time before she becomes fully aware of these destructive feelings (600–606).

Metaphors play an important – and underestimated – role in Mercury's speech. *Varios ... irarum concitat aestus* (564) picks up and confirms the narrator's almost identical words at 532, *saevit amor magnoque irarum fluctuat aestu*[107], and thus portrays Dido in the throes of an emotional storm whose ultimate outcome is unclear. Elsewhere Virgil relies extensively on aquatic metaphors when describing a character's hesitation between different courses of action[108]. Note for instance *Aen*. 12.486–487: *heu quid agat? vario nequiquam fluctuat aestu*, / **[86]** *diversaeque vocant animum in contraria curae* 'Alas, what is he to do? Vainly he tosses on a shifting tide, and conflicting cares call his mind this way and that', where Turnus' deliberations are introduced by a variation on Dido's '*en, quid ago?*' (4.534)[109], and *diversae* recalls *varium*. Or again *Aen*. 8.18–21[110]: *quae Laomedontius heros* / *cuncta videns magno curarum fluctuat aestu*, / *atque animum nunc huc celerem nunc dividit illuc* / *in partisque rapit varias perque omnia versat* 'The hero of Laomedon's line, seeing it all, tosses on a mighty sea of troubles; and now this way, now that he swiftly throws his

106 Note that *dolos* is generic, and although we can connect it with the possibility that Dido might have decided to act upon her revengeful instincts before it was too late, it can also be seen to refer to the *fraus* which Dido is plotting behind her sister's back (4.675). Ovid's Medea will echo this line at *Her*. 12.211 *viderit ista deus, qui nunc mea pectora versat*. *Dolus* is also a key element in the characterization of Seneca's Medea. See e.g. the interaction *donis* / *dolus* at *Med*. 882.

107 *Saevio* can be referred to winds, seas, storms: *OLD s. v.* 3a.

108 On the Greek background to metaphors associating mental upset with a stormy sea (esp. for such verbs as χειμάζω and ταράσσω), see Sansone 1975: 71. Cf. also Segal 1969: 32 on similes involving the sea used to describe intense passion, and primarily in reference to Seneca, Lotito 2001: 15–20 (with further bibliography).

109 Heyne, Forbiger, Ribbeck, Pease and Austin point to Eur. *Med*. 502 as a possible (though inevitably not exclusive) model for Dido's aporia.

110 Cf. DServius' note on *Aen*. 8.19: *fluctuat aestu*: *utrumque verbum de mari est*.

mind, casting it in diverse ways, and turning it to every shift', with *varias*, again, and *versare*[111], which Mercury refers to Dido – albeit in a different sense – at 4.563[112]. Euripides' *Medea* had mined this very same set of metaphorical associations[113], which are, to be sure, common enough, but appear to be particularly appropriate in a narrative context where sea and seafaring play a significant role[114].

It is in this specific context that we should read Mercury's closing statement. *Varium et mutabile semper / femina* (569–70) is an easy target for criticism because it is usually interpreted as a more or less light-hearted[115] prototype of 'la donna è mobile' – and thus would indeed represent an unjustified, callous remark *vis à vis* Dido's devotion and suffering[116]. I would like to suggest, however, that by expanding upon the nautical metaphors suggested by *concitat*[117] and *aestus* at line 564[118] **[87]** (and prepared by *fluctuat aestu*[119] at 532) Mercury's apophthegm rather reflects a traditional analogy[120] between woman and the sea[121]: both can turn suddenly and unpredictably

111 For *versare* used in connection with the sea cf. *Aen*. 6.362 *nunc me fluctus habet versantque in litore venti*.

112 Cf. also *Aen*. 12.665-668, with Traina *ad loc*.

113 Seneca's will follow suit (abundantly): *quid, anime, titubas? ora quid lacrimae rigant / variamque nunc huc ira, nunc illuc amor / diducit? anceps aestus incertam rapit; / ut saeva rapidi bella cum venti gerunt, / utrimque fluctus maria discordes agunt / dubiumque fervet pelagus, haut aliter meum / cor fluctuatur. ira pietatem fugat / iramque pietas – cede pietati, dolor* (937–943).

114 Mastronarde 2002: 35.

115 Feeney 1998: 121–122 talks of 'sprightly misogyny.' Hardie 1991a: 14 perceives instead 'a deeper and sombre truth behind the rhetoric,' alerting to the instability of Dido's role as a female leader.

116 'Mercury is lying, as he lied in 563' (Austin on 569). Cf. Lyne 1989: 48: '[Mercury's statement] is flatly untrue and meant to strike us as such.' *Contra*, Tupet 1976: 263.

117 For *concitare* of winds stirring up a storm see *OLD s. v.* 2(a).

118 The adjective *varius* (*variosque irarum concitat aestus*), is mirrored at 12.831 in reference to Juno (*irarum tantos volvis sub pectore fluctus*). On *aestus* cf. Fantham 1975: 8 nn. 3-4.

119 Cf. the use of *fluctuo* at *Aen*. 10.680 (with a comparable correspondence between inner mental processes and the setting), with S. J. Harrison *ad loc*., and of *fluctus* at 12.831, above n. 118. See also Brown on Lucr. 4.1077.

120 See Murgatroyd 1995, esp. 16–17, who examines some important Hellenistic models (above all Meleager, *A.P.* 5.156). Cf. also Menander, *Monostichoi* 371, p. 54 Jäkel, and Aesop. fab. 168 and 207 Perry.

121 The Virgilian master text of the gender dynamics set in motion by the association between women and sea is to be found in the storm scene at the beginning of the poem, where the storm engulfing Aeneas and his fleet is presented as a manifestation of Juno's *doli* and *irae* (1.130), while Neptunus – compared to a *pietate gravem ac meritis … virum* (1.151) – restores order with masculine authority: *ille regit dictis animos et pectora mulcet: / sic cunctus pelagi cecidit fragor* (1.153–154). Cf. also

from benevolence to rage, and as a consequence their apparently peaceful demeanor cannot be trusted[122]. They are attractive, but dangerous, forces of nature[123]. Dido, a woman at the mercy of the elements, can shift from lull to tempest[124] – as lines 566–567, moving on from metaphor to description, attest[125]. Propertius 2.9.31–36 offers a pertinent term of comparison – note especially the role played by *ira*[126]: **[88]**

sed vobis facilest verba et componere fraudes:
  hoc unum didicit femina semper opus.
non sic incerto mutantur flamine Syrtes[127],
  nec folia hiberno tam tremefacta Noto,
quam cito feminea non constat foedus in ira,
  sive ea causa gravis sive ea causa levis.

7.586–590, where Latinus – *velut pelagi rupes* (586) – steadfastly resists his people's demand to wage war (the masses are assimilated to women and children for their lack of self-control). Cf. also n. 132 below. I plan to return to this issue elsewhere.

122 Cf. Lucr. 2.555-558: ... *ut videantur et indicium mortalibus edant*, / *infidi maris insidias virisque dolumque* / *ut vitare velint*, *neve ullo tempore credant*, / *subdola cum ridet placidi pellacia ponti* (with *aestus* following at 562; note the anthropomorphic *ridet*). Cf. also 5.1004–1005: *nec poterat quemquam placidi pellacia ponti* / *subdola pellicere in fraudem ridentibus undis*, and see Noussia 2001: 284–286. Ovid's Dido expands on the theme at *Her*. 7.53-56 – hardly innocently: *quid*, *si nescires*, *insana quid aequora possunt?* / *expertae totiens tam male credis aquae?* / *ut pelago suadente etiam retinacula solvas*, / *multa tamen latus tristia pontus habet*.

123 See for instance Segal's 1969: 24-33 remarks about the 'suggestive ambiguities' (32) between destruction and nourishment in Ovidian water landscapes.

124 One may also compare Tib. 1.5.75-76 *nescio quid furtivus Amor parat. utere quaeso*, / *dum licet: in liquida nat tibi linter aqua*, if *liquida* is taken to imply 'running', i.e. shifting (as the woman's favour: cf. line 70 *versatur celeri Fors levis orbe rotae*).

125 At line 531 *rursusque resurgens* iconically conveys the notion expressed by *ingeminant*, and may also suggest the toing and froing of storm-waves (for *surgere* used of seas and rivers see *OLD s. v.* 9; for *ingemino* cf. *Georg*. 1.333 *ingeminant austri et densissimus imber*).

126 Note, also, Propertius' threatened 'aggressive' suicide in the lines immediately following (37–39), and the final exclamation *sanguis erit vobis maxima palma meus* (40). A similar theme is developed at 2.5.11–13, though there *amantes* of both sexes are compared to the mutability of seas and clouds. In Hor. *Carm*. 3.9.22–23 Lydia calls the poet *levior cortice et inprobo* / *iracundior Hadria*.

127 Cf. Sall. *Iug*. 78: *nam ubi mare magnum esse et saevire ventis coepit*, *limum harenamque et saxa ingentia fluctus trahunt*: *ita facies locorum cum ventis simul mutatur. Syrtes ab tractu nominatae*. Cf. also Prop. 3.19.7–8 and 3.24.15–16 (the latter in the context of a sustained metaphorical discussion of erotic travails as navigation, cf. Fedeli *ad loc.*). Aeneas had already had trouble with this treacherous and fast-changing features of the landscape during the storm at the beginning of the poem (1.111 and 1.146), where an expression such as *furit aestus harenis* (1.107) suggests an analogy between the stormy seas and the *ira* of Juno. *Syrtis* recurs again at 4.41. On the possible echo of *Absyrtus* in *Syrtis* see later n. 216.

> [But it is easy for girls like you to contrive excuses and deceits: this is the one trade women have always learned. Not so quickly do the Syrtes shift in a veering wind or the leaves flutter in a wintry gale as a woman's promise is broken when she is angry, be the matter serious or be it slight.]

This attitude is expounded at length in Semonides' iambus 'de mulieribus', fr. 7.27–42 West[128]. The punch-line which rounds off this section of the poem (42) is much disputed, but if ἀλλοίην is taken to mean 'changeable', 'mutable'[129], it would represent a very close parallel for Mercury's own *sententia*[130]:

> Another [sc. type of woman] he made from the sea; she has two characters. One day she smiles and is happy ... But on another day she is unbearable to look at or come near to ... Just so the sea often stands without a tremor (ἀτρεμής), harmless (ἀπήμων), a great delight to sailors, in the summer season; but often it raves (μαίνεται), tossed about by thundering waves **[89]** (βαρυκτύποισι κύμασιν φορεομένη). It is the sea that such a woman most resembles in her temper; like the ocean, she has a changeful nature (ταύτῃ μάλιστ᾽ ἔοικε τοιαύτη γυνὴ | ὀργήν· φυὴν δὲ πόντος ἀλλοίην ἔχει)[131].

The naturalistic metaphor presupposed by Mercury's statement also contributes to explain the 'rather dry and scientific tone'[132] of his

128 Horace's *Ode* 1.5 (on which see Nisbet, Hubbard) shows the continuing appeal of this set of metaphorical associations, as the poem weaves sea and nautical metaphors in the description of the love affair between Pyrrha and the *puer*. While the tone is far removed from the drama of *Aeneid* 4, and, consequently, the analogy with the sea only conveys the woman's emotional unreliability, darker images such as *aspera / nigris aequora ventis* (6–7) are noteworthy.

129 Pellizer 1990: 129–130. Note some old translations into Latin quoted *ad loc*.: 'ingenio ... mutabili' (Buchanan); 'marisque instar indolem semper variam habet' (Koeler); 'è l'oceano cosa mutabile' (Leopardi).

130 For proverbial expressions about the analogy between the woman's and the sea's rage see Pellizer 1979: 31-32; on the diffusion of Semonides' text in Hellenistic culture, Pellizer, Tedeschi 1990: xlii-xliii.

131 Translation Lloyd-Jones 1975: 43 (a different translation in Lloyd-Jones 1975: 73). The whole section 37–42 may however be an interpolation: Verdenius 1968: 141, but see also Loraux 1978.

132 Lyne 1989: 50, who attributes the tone to Mercury's contempt for Dido (see later n. 135). But the technical flavour of *mutabile* finds a parallel in *tractabilis*, which the narrator refers to Aeneas at 4.439, yet Anna had used in connection with the weather at 4.53 *dum non tractabile caelum*. *Tractabilis*, too, is mostly used of physical things (before Virgil, already Cic. *Att*. 10.11.3 applies it to persons). Seneca

sententia, which aims to express, as befits a god, a general truth[133] (a 'law of nature')[134] grounded in authority and experience[135].

Criticism of Mercury's 'slander' fails to take into account that his words do not come as an isolated sentence, but complete a gradual process of understanding which has progressed at different speeds for Aeneas on the one hand and for the narrator and his readers on the other. Unlike Aeneas, Mercury is aware of Dido's anguished monologue at 534–552, which betrays a troubled and unpredictable state of mind, **[90]** and barely conceals her resentment both against the Trojans' *periuria* (542) and Anna's reckless advice (548–549)[136]. Aeneas' delay may well suggest that he is far from eager to depart, of course, but also surely implies that he does not take Dido's threats (380–87) at face value. Mercury begs to differ. Henry's rebuttal[137] – endorsed by Pease – that Dido was unswervingly loyal to Aeneas, rather misses the point of these lines, since the god is referring here to Dido's emotional fluctuations and warns Aeneas that her begging for a reprieve at 435–436 is not necessarily her

elaborates on Virgil's images at *Ph.* 580-582, where the nurse compares Hippolytus' imperviousness to that of a rock unmoved by the waves of feminine seduction: *ut dura cautes undique* ***intractabilis*** */ resistit undis et lacessentes aquas / longe remittit, / verba sic spernit mea* (cf. Fantham 1975: 3-4). When Dido and Aeneas meet again in the Underworld, the queen is as resistant as a *cautes* to Aeneas' soothing words: *illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat / nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur / quam si dura silex aut stet Marpesia cautes* (6.469–471).

133 'Il predicato al neutro anziché al femminile generalizza' (Sabbadini on 569).

134 The combination of *varius* and *mutabilis* occurs again at *Aen.* 11.425-426: *multa dies* ***varii****que labor* ***mutabilis*** *aevi / rettulit in melius*, in Turnus' rousing – and solemn – reply to Drances. Though – here – positive in outlook, Turnus' statement still focuses on the unpredictability of events. Note also Curtius Rufus 4.14.19 *breves et mutabiles vices rerum sunt, et fortuna numquam simpliciter indulget*.

135 Lyne 1989: 49 detects 'refinements of unpleasantness' in Mercury's use of the neuter forms (cf. Conington on 569, who speaks of 'contempt'), and the 'ironic' use of *femina*. On the 'predicative use of the neuter adjective in *sententiae*' see McKeown on Ov. *Am.* 1.9.4, with Kühner, Stegmann 1.32 and Hofmann, Szantyr 444 (who posits a possible Greek influence), and Sabbadini, above n. 133. The use of *femina* may also be explained, however, as a balancing element *vis à vis* the negative statement of *varium et mutabile* (perhaps with a concessive colour: 'even a (respectable) lady is still …').

136 The tone of Dido's first words to her sister – *i, soror* (424) – is somewhat surprising, cf. DServius on 416: 'ANNA prope invidiose, quia ipsa nuptias suaserat.' *I* had been used only once before in the poem, at 4.381, with evident sarcasm (note Pease's defensive remarks on 424). Further use in the poem is certainly sarcastic at 9.634, possibly at 7.425–26 (but cf. Horsfall *ad loc.*), while 6.546 (twice) is emphatically positive. Cf. Brink on Hor. *Ep.* 2.2.76, Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr 837 and Bessone on Ov. *Her.* 12.204, with further bibliography.

137 J. Henry 1873-92: 2.803.

final reaction to his departure. After all, even her welcoming generosity towards the Trojans had been unexpected, and Venus had to intervene to make sure that Dido would not change her attitude – *ne quo se numine mutet*[138]. Now, for a second time, a god is concerned that the queen's feelings may undergo a sudden transformation, and, as Martianus Capella explains (5.485), turn *ex amore in odium*[139].

Part two

7. Dido's words to Anna at lines 416–436 mark a decisive stage in her emotional journey from love to revenge, and really raise the stakes in the battle of wills with Aeneas. Not only has he decided to leave, thus prompting Dido's first violent rebuke at 365–387. Now he reiterates his decision even in the face of a seemingly minimal request from a woman who appears no longer enraged, but submissive and almost humble. Even if he is not keen to give Dido a last chance to revive **[91]** their relationship (her primary, if dissimulated, objective) he could at least grant her a final farewell and receive in exchange the retraction of her curse[140] and a more peaceful journey toward his final destination. By making Aeneas snub Dido's request without appeal, Virgil massively orients the readers' emotional allegiances in her favour and against Aeneas[141]. Her subsequent hatred, the final malediction, and its gruesome historical consequences[142], will be presented as the result not so much of Aeneas' decision to depart (which can after all be blamed on

138 *Aen*. 1.674, cf. above n. 84.

139 See already Heyne on 569: 'h.l. tantum eo pertinet, quod in muliebri animo summus amor in summam saevitiam et immanitatem verti potest, ut adeo Aeneae de salute cogitandum sit.' Similarly Pascal *ad loc*., criticised by Buscaroli *ad loc*.

140 Cartault 1926: 324 (cf. n. 139 below); Austin on 436; Casali 1999: 116.

141 Christian authors will go further, and rewrite the story of a chaste Dido. For a brief account of readers' reaction to Dido's plight see Farron 1980.

142 Casali 1999: 118: 'Aeneas behaves ... also in such a way as to provoke the curse which, in the "fictional world" of the poem, is the cause of the sufferings and future sorrows of the Trojans in the second half of the *Aeneid* and of thousands of people through the centuries of conflict between Rome and Carthage.' Had Aeneas agreed to delay his departure, Dido would have 'repaid him with interest' by turning her curse into a blessing: Casali (2004-05): 163–164. This assumes that Dido is to be taken at face value when she claims, among other things, that she no longer seeks the *coniugium antiquum*, and would be entirely satisfied by some *inane tempus*.

a Fate he cannot control), but more directly – as Pease remarks –[143] of his gratuitous unwillingness to grant her the *tempus inane* he could easily spare without scuppering the main plan.

This is a line of thinking which the text itself encourages. Before detailing her request to Aeneas, Dido offers an inverse *captatio benevolentiae* as she points out that she is not one of his enemies, specifically not one of the Greek leaders who attacked Troy nor has she dug up Anchises' tomb[144] (425–427). There is no contextual need for Dido to recall these historical truisms[145], even if the alternative strategy of **[92]** reminding Aeneas of all the benefits she has actually bestowed on him has already proved ineffectual (4.317 and 373–376). To a Roman audience, however, Dido's words would surely have evoked the young Hannibal's oath to be a relentless enemy of Aeneas' descendants[146]. Silius, ever an astute reader of the *Aeneid*, adds to what we know from historical sources the telling detail that the oath was sworn on Dido's *manes*[147], thus making explicit the connection between Dido's death and Hannibal's hostility which the *Aeneid* already plots as a direct consequence of Aeneas' desertion and Dido's curse at the end of Book 4 (622–629)[148]. But while this long-term malediction is only readable *sous rature* in Dido's *excusatio non petita*, its evocation introduces an element of dissimulation in the context in which it is uttered. Indeed, Quintilian quotes '*non ego cum Danais Troianam exscindere gentem / iuravi*' as an instance of *aversio*[149], a form of dissimulation through which *aut aliud expectasse nos aut*

143 Pease 1935: 34: '*After* this scene and the failure of her subsequent appeal to Aeneas [4.416–449], her unrestrained love turns to an equally intense hatred'; E. L. Harrison 1989: 16: '*After* many futile attempts through Anna to delay Aeneas' departure, Dido's mental disintegration begins (405ff.)' (emphases mine).

144 An act which the Carthaginians had committed (Liv. 26.13.13, on Hannibal), and the Romans abhorred: it threatened the extinction of the polity (cf. Hor. *Ep*. 16.13–14, with Watson). The desecration was attributed to Diomedes in an alternative version of the story recorded by Varro (Servius on 4.427; D'Anna 1989: 159–196, and p. 211–12/96 below), the same according to which Anna was Aeneas' lover (cf. 4.421–23). It is significant that these two references to the 'Varronian' plot emerge side by side in this passage.

145 The mention of *Aulis* is particularly poignant given the analogy between Dido's and Iphigenia's situations: see DuBois 1976 and Schiesaro 2005: 95.

146 Polyb. 3.11, Liv. 21.1.4, Nep. *Han*. 2.4, Appian. 6.2.9, Mart. 9.43.9.

147 3.118–119 *hanc mentem iuro nostri per numina Martis, / per manes, regina, tuos*.

148 A detailed analysis of the oath in Tupet 1980, who rightly insists on its connection with Dido's final curse in *Aen*. 4.

149 According to modern classifications, *aversio a materia* (Lausberg 1969: 244).

maius aliquid timuisse simulamus 'we pretend either that we expected something else, or that we feared something worse' (9.2.39)[150]. The perception of an immediate threat – that Dido may turn against Aeneas, acting as a Hannibal *ante litteram* just as he will eventually follow in the queen's steps – is hindered in this context both by the easily discernible allusion to Hannibal's oath, which points to a distant future, and by the reassuring precedents Dido's words evoke. Upon their arrival, as they beg *prohibe infandos a navibus ignes* 'ward off the horror of flames from our ships' (1.525), the Trojans emphasize in similar terms that they have no hostile intentions: *non nos aut ferro Libycos populare penatis / venimus, aut raptas ad litora vertere praedas; / non ea vis animo nec tanta superbia victis* 'We have not come to spoil with the sword your Libyan homes or to drive stolen booty to the shore. No such violence is in our hearts, nor have the vanquished such assurance' (1.527–529); and Achaemenides' frank admission that he had been an enemy of the Trojans' (3.602–603 *scio me Danais e classibus unum / et bello Iliacos fateor petiisse penatis* 'I know that I am one from the Danaan ships, and own that I warred against the gods of Ilium') paves the way for reconciliation[151].

[93] At least since Heinze, critics have been inclined to chart Dido's psychology as a linear trajectory between distinct, well-defined stages, an organic development from love to hatred: 'Each new phase in the outward course of events leads to a new phase in her inner development; and each of these phases represents as purely as possible one particular state of mind, uncontaminated by any other'[152]. Heinze's assessment clearly reveals his penchant for 'classic' dramatic forms and organic, well-constructed characters[153]. After sensing Aeneas' betrayal, Heinze's Dido moves in an orderly way from 'painful surprise' to 'scornful hatred', then from 'humble renunciation' to 'despair', and finally – after line 604 – from 'anger and thirst for revenge' to 'sublime peace'[154]. There is little room, in this scene-by-scene crescendo, for any

150 On Ovid's take on these lines see Casali 2004-05: 158–164.

151 The repetition of *populare* at 4.403 in connection with the Trojans' preparation for departure retroactively calls into question the earnestness of their statement. Note also that Achaemenides' *spargite me in fluctus vastoque immergite ponto* (3.605) anticipates 4.600-601 *non potui abreptum, divellere corpus et undis / spargere?*

152 Heinze 1915: 103.

153 On some aspects of the Heinze's cultural background see Schiesaro 2006.

154 Heinze 1915: 103.

non-linear commingling of disparate emotions[155]. Heinze's influential approach inevitably favours the systematic occlusion of any threatening overtone from Dido's words at 416–436[156]. At that stage Dido is in her phase of 'humble renunciation'[157], if not outright 'self-abasement'[158] and therefore, to repeat once again Mackail's comment, 'it would be quite out of place to make [her] end this piteous appeal on a note of savage irony'[159]. Outright hostility and feelings of revenge will be allowed only at a later stage, only once Aeneas' obdurate denial has forced her into a 'demented state of delirium', and she is no longer her normal **[94]** self[160]. Henry puts it unequivocally: 'Dido [...] was unchangeably and devotedly attached to Aeneas, whom, if she did not pursue with fire and sword, it was not that his inconstancy did not so deserve, but that her magnanimity disdained, and her still-subsisting passion forbade'[161].

Awareness that Dido's words to Aeneas through Anna contain an implicit threat does much to complicate Heinze's linear analysis[162]. It endows Dido's character with a more nuanced and tormented psychological profile, one in which conflicting emotions are not neatly

155 Heinze 1915: 103: '[Virgil] does not describe a gloomy, irregular oscillation of the emotions: his Dido is not tossed this way and that by the conflict of passions. On the contrary, the tragedy strides to its conclusion in a clear and controlled fashion.'

156 He had been authoritatively preceded by Christian writers, who, as they recast Dido as an *exemplum* of matronly virtue which comprehensively ignores her plight in *Aeneid* 4, can be seen to inherit and magnify Virgil's own displacing strategy.

157 Heinze 1915: 103.

158 Pease 1935: 35 n. 263. Cf. e.g. Cartault 1926: 324, according to whom the request for a 'court répit' 'c'est une façon de retirer les menaces de vengeance qu'elle a proférées contre Enée', or Perret (1978–80) 3.189 'Le contenu de cette proposition [433-436] apparaît par contraste avec les menaces de la veille ... et les fureurs qui renaîtront le lendemain.'

159 Mackail 1930: 151, endorsed by Austin *ad loc*.

160 Heinze 1915: 104. According to Heinze 1915: 110 n. 16, 'Virgil has portrayed Dido in such a way that the *inhumanitas* involved in, for example, killing Ascanius and serving his dismembered limbs to his father as a Thyestian meal would not appear natural, however justifiable or not one might consider such an act to be.' Cf. Pease 1935: 35 '*Only here* [sc. 4.600-602, 615-620] appear those characteristics of barbarism and inhumanity which the Romans were wont, perhaps unjustly, to associate with the people of Hannibal'; Paratore 1947: 11: 'un vago progetto che Didone agiterà *solo* al culmine del suo sfogo e già con la coscienza della sua impraticabilità' (emphases mine).

161 J. Henry 1873-92: 2.803.

162 It also complicates Thomas' 2001: 162 assertion that Dryden's Dido is 'more dangerous than the Virgilian text suggests.' Dryden emphasizes the menacing aspect of her character, but he takes his cue from the *Aeneid*. Thomas' Dido is unequivocally unthreatening and sympathetic (cf. 159).

distinct from each other but interact in unpredictable fashion[163]. Indeed, the Euripidean intertext creates a compelling tension between the dominant motif of Dido's deepening despair and the slow emergence of a perceptible – if repressed – sense of danger for Aeneas and the Trojans. Mercury's much criticised 'superfluous'[164] second intervention (560–570) acquires a different significance if we assume that from his divine (if not omniscient)[165] point of view[166] (and our intertextual **[95]** competence) Dido's words fail to sound entirely reassuring: her entreaties carry too many traces of Medea's 'sweet-to-hear' words[167]. Aeneas' delay is thus suffused with an air of danger, and his early-morning departure becomes narratively motivated – there are dangers in store if he awaits a

163 As rightly remarked, for instance, by La Penna (1984-91) 55: 'Didone, come la Medea di Euripide e Apollonio, è eroina del dubbio: ci sono ondeggiamenti, sia nell'azione sia nei monologhi.'

164 Heinze 1915: 113 n. 34, albeit 'as far as the narrative is concerned, but not from a technical point of view.'

165 A concept now usefully problematized by Culler 2004.

166 Mercury's first message to Aeneas had already established his access to a superior source of knowledge, see e.g. the echo of Jupiter's question at 235 in Mercury's words at 271. Comprehensiveness and objectivity, however, are not the qualities mortals should expect from Mercury (or other gods, for that matter). Here, for instance, the *Zephyros* ... *secundos* encouragingly mentioned at 562 quickly turn into opposing winds at 5.2 (*fluctusque atros Aquilone secabat*), only to return (5.32-33: *secundi* / ... *Zephyri*) once Aeneas (unexpectedly for him) realizes that Sicily ought to be his next destination (28 *flecte viam velis*).

167 Cf. Eur. *Med*. 316 λέγεις ἀκοῦσαι μαλθάκ᾽ (Creon to Medea), and esp. 776 μολόντι (sc. Jason) δ᾽ αὐτῷ μαλθακοὺς λέξω λόγους 'When he arrives, I shall speak soothing words to him', when Medea outlines her revenge. The adj. μαλθακός, which encodes Medea's deception, resurfaces in Dido's *mollis aditus* (423) – she will exploit Anna's 'sweet approach' in dealing with Aeneas (*mollis* carries further complex overtones, see n. 174). Ennius makes Medea directly aware of the deceiving nature of her soothing words: *nequaquam istuc istac ibit*; *magna inest certatio*. / *nam ut ego illi supplicarem tanta blandiloquentia* / *ni ob rem* (222–227 Jocelyn). *Blandiloquentia* (not otherwise attested in archaic or classical Latin, as Jocelyn points out) is interesting in the light of the words with which Dido (probably, not certainly: M. Barchiesi 1962: 477–479) addresses Aeneas in Naevius: *blande et docte percontat*, *Aenea quo pacto* / *Troiam urbem liquerit* (fr. 23 Barchiesi). Attempts have been made to build upon this fragment the image of a Circe-like Naevian Dido, who would wheedle Aeneas into talking with insinuating charm (*blande*) and cunning (*docte*), but see M. Barchiesi's (1962) 479–481 caveats. However, in *Aen*. 1.670-672 *nunc Phoenissa tenet Dido blandisque moratur* / *vocibus*, *et vereor quo se Iunonia vertant* / *hospitia* (Venus recruiting Cupid) *blandis* ... *vocibus* focalizes Venus' worries about the effect Dido is having on her son, and may almost be seen as a gloss on the narrator's definition of the Carthaginians as *bilinguis* (1.661): *quippe domum timet* [sc. *Venus*] *ambiguam Tyriosque bilinguis* (see above n. 93 on *fides Punica*). The Homeric model is Athena's speech to Zeus about Calypso, *Od*. 1.56–57.

new dawn at Carthage. The whole tragic colouring of the central section of Book 4 is strengthened: there is even more of a reason for Aeneas to leave swiftly, and no less cause for Dido to feel angry.

If we accept that Dido's speech to Anna betrays unconscious feelings of revenge, we can gain a fuller image of her psychological complexity and development in the second half of the book. Love and hatred, self-humiliation and revenge emerge not so much as polar extremes in a gradual, painful journey of discovery and despair, but as conflicting emotions which repeatedly vie for predominance in Dido's troubled heart. If we allow that Dido's psychological evolution is less linear than Heinze suggests, we quickly realize that her words to Anna are not isolated in suggesting the coexistence of contradictory, mostly **[96]** repressed feelings. In fact these include not just a desire for revenge against Aeneas, but also a degree of resentment *vis à vis* Anna, both for her role in encouraging Dido to pursue a relationship fraught with dangers (549 *his*, *germana*, *malis oneras atque obicis hosti*)[168], and for her excessive closeness to Aeneas[169]. According to an alternative version of the legend, which Virgil in the main rejects[170], it was Anna, not Dido, who attracted Aeneas' love at Carthage: recollection of this discarded story-line[171] allows us to appreciate the full import of Dido's words at 421–423: *solam nam perfidus ille / te colere*[172], *arcanos etiam tibi credere sensus*; / *sola viri mollis aditus et tempora*[173] *noras*[174] 'for you alone that

168 As confirmed by *Her*. 7.191, where Anna is *meae male conscia culpae*.

169 Lyne 1989: 31-32 also sees traces of 'unfair (and perhaps largely unconscious) resentment' in Dido's characterisation of Sychaeus' death as a betrayal (4.17, see above n. 43).

170 Apart from Dido's words at 421-423, traces of this alternative plot also emerge as the text hints at how similar, indeed almost interchangeable, the two sisters are, see 4.8 *unanimam*, with Schiesaro 2005: 105.

171 About which see D'Anna 1989: 159–196. See above n. 144.

172 As noticed by Nonius, who includes this passage under *colere* = *diligere* (p. 250 M.). La Cerda *ad loc*.: 'An in verbo *colere* latet aliquid? Hoc verbum pro *amare*, interdum veteres dixerunt, sicut *cultores*, pro *amatores*', and shortly afterwards, noting the ritual overtones of *colere* 'ergo quis sciat, an hic Dido aliquid suspicetur de zelotypia, usaque sit obscuro verbo, et ambiguo, indicans Annae ritualitatem, quae ad se virum pellexerit? praesertim cum addat *perfidus*, perinde, in me perfidus, quia rivalis meus, et tui cultor.'

173 This line is echoed by Silius' Anna when she first addresses Aeneas: *cui sic verba trahens largis cum fletibus Anna / incipit et blandas addit pro tempore voces* (8.79–80): *pro tempore* echoes *tempora noras*, and *blandas* fully develops the erotic undertone of *mollis* (see the following note).

174 Significantly, Virgil shows Aeneas reasoning in terms which are subsequently

traitor made his friend, to you he confided even his secret thoughts, you alone have known the hour for easy access to him'.

While Virgil confines himself to oblique hints at a potentially very different plot-line, the erotic undertones of Anna's and Aeneas' friendship receive a fuller airing later in the tradition. As they meet again in *Fasti* 3 Aeneas is at pains to point out to Lavinia that his welcoming of **[97]** the now derelict exile is the least he can do for the sister of his saviour: '*hanc tibi cur tradam*, *pia causa*, *Lavinia coniunx*, / *est mihi*: *consumpsi naufragus huius opes*. / *orta Tyro est*, *regnum Lybica possedit in ora*. / *quam precor ut carae more sororis ames*' "My wife Lavinia, I have a dutiful reason for entrusting this lady to your care; when I was shipwrecked I consumed her substance. She is of Tyrian descent; she owns a kingdom on the Libyan coast; I pray you, love her as a dear sister" (629–632). But Lavinia, unimpressed by this display of belated *pietas*, and clearly well-versed in the finer points of the tradition, suspects more is at stake than meets the eye (633–636), and reacts by playing Dido *furens*, rather than Dido *hospes*: *non habet exactum quid agat*: *furialiter odit*, / *et parat insidias et cupit ulta mori* 'She had not decided what to do. She hated like a fury, and hatched a plot, and longed to die avenged' (637–638), a nod to *Aen*. 4.563 (*illa dolos dirumque nefas sub pectore versat*) which is followed by the appearance of Dido's ghost warning Anna, as Mercury had Aeneas, that she must leave in haste what has become an hostile setting. But *cupit ulta mori*, a transparent reworking of Dido's final curse, further complicates the picture. Aeneas left behind in Carthage, the Romans' own Thebes[175], a world of ill-defined boundaries, incestuous tensions, blurred gender identities[176], a household (and a land) *ambigua* (1.661) both because

attributed to Anna: *sola viri mollis aditus et tempora noras* (422-423) echoes *temptaturum aditus et quae mollissima fandi* / *tempora*, *quis rebus modus* (293–299). *Mollis* (about which see also n. 167 above) conveys a sense of insinuating indirectness, bordering in Aeneas' case on cowardice (examples in *OLD s. v.* 13 (a)), in Anna's on flirtatiousness (*OLD s. v.* 16, Pichon 1902 *s. v. mollis*: as used at *Aen*. 4.66 *est mollis flamma medullas*). La Cerda rightly compares an erotic intertext, Tib. 2.4.19 *ad dominam faciles aditus per carmina quaero*.

175 For Thebes as a locus without 'a viable system of relations and differences' (including sexual ones), see Zeitlin 1990; on Carthage and Thebes in Virgil and Ovid Hardie 1990.

176 As well as untrustworthy, Romans are fond of depicting Carthaginians as effeminate, their use of *tunicae* with sleeves representing a favourite polemical target (as explained by Gell. 6.12): cf. *Aen*. 9.614-616 (see n. 289), with Enn. *Ann*. 325 V.^{2} = 303 Sk. and several Plautine references listed by Skutsch *ad loc*.

potentially untrustworthy and disturbingly confused[177]. He is too similar to Dido, in many respects almost a double, or worse, given Rome's founding myth, a brother[178]; both Dido and her sister are attracted to him, and he may well be to both; his own son[179] is, at times, a substitute object of attraction for the queen[180]; Dido herself is a woman per- **[98]** forming male roles[181]. But can he really leave 'Carthage' behind? Now that he has fulfilled his destiny, and married Lavinia, we discover that history is all too ready to repeat itself. Analogies between Dido's and Aeneas' lives as exiles are no less striking than those now linking Anna to Aeneas[182]. This time even their names are uncannily similar[183], and so will be their destiny, since Aeneas also metamorphoses into a *numen* after being swallowed by the Numicius (Ov. *Met*. 14.581–608), the same river which has become Anna Perenna's abode. 'Feminine' waters ultimately engulf Aeneas as he merges with his double – and Dido's.

Lavinia, whom Virgil encourages readers to see as Dido's opposite, turns out to be no less emotional, and just as prepared to plot revenge in stealth as she feels threatened. She, too, can hate 'like a Fury' (*furialiter*), thus showing that Juno's power is as momentous in Latium as it was in Africa (Aeneas himself will eventually succumb), and did not abate after Amata's suicide[184]. In this context, Aeneas' request that Lavinia treat Anna with sisterly love – *precor ut carae more sororis ames* (632) – is more ominous than reassuring.

177 See *OLD s. v. ambiguus* 5 (a), 6, 7.

178 Further discussion and bibliography in Schiesaro 2005: 96–97.

179 Initially (1.657–660) a disguise for Aeneas' own half-brother, Cupid; when Venus talks to him she refers to Aeneas as *frater* ... *Aeneas* ... *tuus* (1.667).

180 A trace of this ambiguity may be detected in Silius' narrative as well. When she lands in Latium Anna encounters Aeneas and Ascanius together, and while she immediately recognizes Aeneas's well-known face, she falls at his son's feet (8.73-74). She then tells Aeneas that in her despair Dido both embraced Ascanius' statue and gazes at Aeneas' portrait (8.91-93, with *nunc* ... *nunc* underlining the parallelism between the two gestures). Aeneas replies in kind: *iuro caput*, *Anna*, *tibique* / *germanaeque tuae dilectum mitis Iuli* (8.106–107).

181 The complexities inherent in Dido's sexual identity and role are highlighted by the unexpected presence of Caeneus alongside the queen in the *Lugentes campi*: see G. S. West 1980, and n. 369 below.

182 For a Virgilian anticipation of this connection see above nn. 144 and 171.

183 Ahl 1985: 309–315. The slope is indeed slippery: 'Anna' is in turn easily connected to 'Hannibal.'

184 Spence 1999: 88–89 offers perceptive remarks on the parallel role of *furor* in Carthage and Rome.

As he stages his own *Aeneid* Silius adds substantially to the intricacies of Anna's story, although the authenticity of a crucial central section, known as *Additamentum Aldinum* (8.144–223), is disputed[185]. More explicitly than in *Fasti* 3, Anna's reappearance in *Punica* 8 alerts to the continuing power of repetition and regression. Here Aeneas is literally 'seized anew' – *repetitus* (8.104) – by his love for Dido, once again mediated by her *Doppelgänger* sister, and allows himself a sentimental walk down memory lane, looking back (8.108 *respiciens*) at the tragic outcome of his sojourn at Carthage[186]. As Aeneas, Anna and **[99]** Dido re-enact their triangle with different roles, Dido's appearance as Mercury-cum-Hector (8.168–183) credits Lavinia with very much the same aggressive instincts we have been tracing in Virgil's Dido: *'his, soror, in tectis longae indulgere quieti, / heu nimium secura, potes? nec, quae tibi fraudes / tendantur, quae circumstent discrimina, cernis?* 'Sister, too heedless sister, how can you bear to sleep long under this roof? Are you blind to the snares laid for you and the dangers that surround you?' (168–170). Dido, to be sure, describes Lavinia's train of thought with the same words Mercury had applied to hers in *Aeneid* 4, as *iam tacitas suspecta Lavinia fraudes / molitur dirumque nefas sub corde volutat* 'I distrust Lavinia – already she is laying snares in secret, and ponders some horrible outrage' (176–177) effectively quotes *illa dolos dirumque nefas in pectore versat* (4.563)[187].

Other sections of Book 4 offer substantial evidence, I believe, of hostile feelings on Dido's part, and thus help shape a fuller account of her psychological complexity. They are (i) the authorial introduction to Dido's words to Anna (412–415); (ii) her dream in the anguished night after this last entreaty has been rejected (465–473); and finally, (iii) the magic rites at 504–521. Just as important are two short, poignant passages where Dido voices impossible retrospective wishes, first that it has not been possible for her to lead her life *more ferae* (550–552), and

185 A strong defence of authenticity, and further bibl., in Brugnoli, Santini 1995.

186 *Respicere* is always a loaded act for Aeneas. It is his failure to look back that prevents him from noticing Creusa's disappearance (*Aen*. 2.736–740), and when he does look it is too late: *amissam respexi* (741) (for the Orpheus and Eurydice model see Schiesaro 2003). So, too, as he leaves Carthage, and looks back when Dido's pyre is already burning (5.3 *respiciens*). Ovid's Anna will behave in a similar fashion: *moenia respiciens* (*Fast*. 3.566).

187 On Anna in Ovid and Silius see also later, p. 238–39/208.

then that she has not hurt Aeneas while it was still possible (600–602). The interpretation of these passages which I have offered elsewhere[188] forms an integral component of the present discussion.

8. Virgil had introduced Dido's words to Anna at 416–436 with an emphatic authorial statement (412–415):

> improbe Amor, quid non mortalia pectora cogis!
> ire iterum in lacrimas, iterum temptare[189] precando
> cogitur et supplex animos summittere amori,
> ne quid inexpertum frustra moritura relinquat.
>
> [O relentless Love, to what do you not drive the hearts of men. Once more she must needs break into tears, once more assail him with prayer, and humbly bow down her pride to love, lest she leave anything untried and go to death in vain.]

[100] which clearly recalls and condenses Apollonius Rhodius, Argonautica 4.445–449[190]:

> σχέτλι᾽ Ἔρως, μέγα πῆμα, μέγα στύγος ἀνθρώποισιν, 445
> ἐκ σέθεν οὐλόμεναί τ᾽ ἔριδες στοναχαί τε πόνοι τε,
> ἄλγεά τ᾽ ἄλλ᾽ ἐπὶ τοῖσιν ἀπείρονα τετρήχασιν.
> δυσμενέων ἐπὶ παισὶ κορύσσεο, δαῖμον, ἀερθείς,
> οἷος Μηδείῃ στυγερὴν φρεσὶν ἔμβαλες ἄτην.
>
> [Cruel Love, great affliction, great abomination for humans; from you come deadly quarrels and groans and toils, and countless other pains besides these are stirred up. May it be against my enemies' children, O god, that you rise up and arm yourself, being such as when you cast abominable madness into the mind of Medea.]

This striking authorial intervention, with its 'hymnal flavour'[191], introduces a pivotal development in both the action of the *Argonautica*

188 Schiesaro 2005.

189 *Temptare* can have erotic connotations: cf. Tib. 1.2.17 with Maltby *ad loc*. and Prop. 1.3.15 with Fedeli *ad loc*.

190 Note, however, that the reference to Apollonius, already in La Cerda and Heyne, is afterwards mentioned only by Forbiger, Conington, Buscaroli and Pease.

191 Hunter 1993: 116 n. 68.

and the character of Medea, the killing of Absyrtus (4.391–481). The unusually strong[192] metanarrative question which follows (450–451)[193] enhances the prominence of the apostrophe by stressing the enormity of the crime which Medea has devised and which the narrator is now going to describe in detail. Virgil establishes an emphatic link with his Greek model[194] not only by translating verbatim the first two words of Apollonius' line as a 'motto', but also by faithfully replicating the internal echo of σχέτλιε, which the narrator applies to Eros at 445 after Medea refers it to Jason a few lines earlier, at 376[195]. Similarly, Dido calls Aeneas *improbe* at 386[196], and *Amor* is labelled in the same way at 412[197].

Medea devises the killing of her brother after she fathoms Jason's betrayal. She is furious (4.391), and excogitates a μέγαν δόλον (4.421) to stave off her demise (her lover had effectively agreed to return her to the wrath of Aeëtes in exchange for a safe voyage home). Under the **[101]** combined strength of Eros and Ate (4.445–449) Medea metamorphoses into a fully tragic character: her insistence on the betrayal of χάρις[198], her worries about the enemies' scorn (389)[199], the entrapment of Absyrtus with devious words and beautiful garments[200], the mention of Ate – these are all details which strongly convey the centrality of tragedy in this part of the epic poem[201]. It is exactly at this point that Apollonius' Medea turns into the protagonist of Euripides' play.

I suspect that Virgil's transparent allusion at 4.412 is designed precisely to evoke this momentous development in the story of Medea[202], and to cast an ominous shadow over Dido's words at 416–436. As *improbe*

192 Livrea 1973: 143; Paduano, Fusillo 1986: 585; Hunter 1993: 116.
193 Virgil inverts Apollonius' sequence, and has the apostrophe (412-415) follow, rather than precede, the narrator's metanarrative intervention (408–411).
194 A comparable link may be established – *via Aen*. 4 – between Apollonius' line and *Aen*. 3.56–57 *quid non mortalia pectora cogis, / auri sacra fames*: Jacobson 2005b.
195 The connection between σχέτλιε at A.R. 4.376 and *Aen*. 4.386 does not appear to be mentioned in commentaries, or in Nelis 2001.
196 As Medea calls Jason at Ov. *Her*. 12.204.
197 As at *Ecl*. 8.49 and 50.
198 Paduano 1972: 217.
199 Paduano 1972: 222.
200 Hunter 1993: 60-61.
201 Paduano 1972: 217, 223–223. Note, however, that Paduano rightly stresses the fundamental continuity of Medea's character, who, even as the young woman in love of Book 3, is never a 'shy' *Mädchen* who suddenly turns into a dangerous sorceress. Cf. Paduano, Fusillo 1986: 581. On a different line Kenney 2001: 267–268.
202 Although, of course, subsequent events differ, as remarked by Nelis 2001: 165.

Amor prepares readers for the threatening implications of her message to Aeneas, the allusion can be considered, retrospectively, as the opening salvo in a sequence of carefully balanced clues which punctuate the text for the next two hundred lines, and coherently, if covertly, develop the theme of Dido's intermittent and repressed murderous intentions.

Direct as the evocation of Apollonius undoubtedly is[203], Virgil's strategic manipulation of his model is evident, too. *Improbe Amor* is a direct translation of σχέτλι᾽ Ἔρως which bypasses Catullus' *sancte puer* (64.94), but Virgil abruptly cuts off the text to which he alludes: he writes out Apollonius' apotropaic gesture at 4.448–449[204], reduces to a one-liner his insistent description of the sufferings caused by Love (445–447), and shifts the emphasis from the pain that Love can inflict (ἔριδες, στοναχαί, πόνοι, ἄλγεα) to the actions Love forces to accomplish.

These innovations are all part of a coherent attempt to tame a passage which in its original context heralded the description of the most **[102]** violent of violent crimes. In the *Aeneid*, *improbe Amor* is suitably removed from the curse Dido utters at 381–387[205], and instead follows the elaborate description of Aeneas' preparations to depart and the pain they inflict on Dido; most significantly, *improbe Amor* introduces Dido's final, desperate appeal to Aeneas through Anna at 416–436. Indeed, the context invites us to recognize that Love is *improbus* precisely because it can turn a proud[206] woman like Dido into a *supplex* ready to humiliate herself in the vain attempt to retain her unfaithful lover (413–415), not because it can push her to act as Medea did[207]. (It should be noted, however, that Dido's self-characterization as a suppliant is in itself suspect, for already Euripides' Medea manages to overcome Creon's resistance, in the scene we have been referring to, by posing – deceptively – as a suppliant)[208].

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203 Apollonius' own opening words also appear to replicate Theognis 1231–1234, but on the relationship between the two texts see Vetta 1980: 37–39.

204 Hunter 1993: 116 n. 68.

205 Hosidius Geta will push in the opposite direction; it's Medea herself who exclaims *improbe Amor*, *quid non mortalia pectora cogis?* (12).

206 As conveyed by the plural *animi* at 4.414 (see Austin *ad loc.*).

207 By drastically condensing the apostrophe, Virgil also suppresses the sea metaphors which punctuate Apollonius' lines (Catullus 64.94-98 has *iactastis* and *fluctibus*), and associate the effects of Eros to a storm (Hunter 1993: 117 n. 72). These metaphors, however, play an important role in the surrounding context, see above p. 85. Moreover, as Hunter 1993: 117 n. 72 rightly notes, at 408–410 Dido is looking out at the sea.

208 The specific language of supplication occurs repeatedly in the scene with Creon

While the novel context, and the use of words such as *supplex*, *precando*, *summittere* and *frustra* (not to mention *moritura*), strive to emphasize the difference *vis à vis* Apollonius' model, they cannot fully erase its menacing nature, which still lurks in Dido's request to Aeneas, and alerts the reader that in the queen's mind love and hate, resignation and revenge continue to coexist: there is more to link Dido's verbal violence of 381–387 to the desperate appeal of 416–436 than meets the eye[209].

Just as the allusion to Euripides' *Medea* surfaces twice, at lines 433 and 568, so, too, the Apollonian intertext heralded at 412 finds a crucial confirmation later in the book. Directly after Mercury spells out to Aeneas how dangerous it is to delay his departure (and in so doing **[103]** confirms the relevance of the Euripidean intertext to Dido's message at 433–436), Dido finally displays an awareness of her murderous feelings. By now, of course, it is too late, because Aeneas is gone, and Dido can only express her regret at not having acted earlier (600–606):

> non potui abreptum divellere[210] corpus et undis
> spargere? non socios, non ipsum absumere ferro
> Ascanium patriisque epulandum ponere mensis?
> verum anceps pugnae fuerat fortuna. fuisset:
> quem metui moritura? faces in castra tulissem
> implessemque foros flammis natumque patremque
> cum genere exstinxem, memet super ipsa dedissem.
>
> [Could I not have seized him, torn him limb from limb, and scattered the pieces on the waves? Could I not have put his men to the sword, and Ascanius himself, and served him up as a meal at his father's table? But perhaps the issue of battle had been doubtful? Suppose it had been: doomed to death, whom had I to fear? I should have carried fire into his camp, filled his decks with flame, blotted out father and son together with the whole race, and immolated myself on top of all.]

In this sustained fantasy of counterfactual revenge[211] Dido brings together

(324-351), at 326, 336 and 338. See Mastronarde 2002 on 324-351.

209 On the repetition of *i* at 381 and 424 see above n. 136.

210 Cf. Gossrau *ad loc.*: 'Baccharum more.'

211 The late, anonymous *Epistula Didonis ad Aeneam* (AL 71 Sh. B. = 83 R.) transforms *non potui ...?* into *poteram* (93, 95): but *amor* prevented committing such a *nefas*. I

a number of notable paradigms (including Pentheus' *sparagmos*)[212], but lines 600–601 refer unequivocally to the *maschalismos*[213] of Medea's brother Absyrtus[214]: the repetition *abreptum/ absumere*[215] could perhaps be seen as a phonic reminder of the man's name[216]. Although the most detailed description of the murder is offered in the *Argonautica* (where Jason strikes the fatal blow) Dido's words recall a different (older) tradition[217], according to which Medea herself is the murderess. This is the version mentioned by Euripides' Medea (lines **[104]** 167 and 1334), who, however, commits the crime next to the family hearth before leaving Colchis: by blending the two different strains of the tradition Virgil engages at once with both Euripides and Apollonius, foregrounds Medea's responsibility, and places Absyrtus' death in a marine setting which is appropriate to the narrative context[218].

The final part of Dido's outburst (604–606) establishes yet another link with the *Argonautica*[219]. Medea, too, had threatened to throw herself onto a pyre as soon as she had sensed Jason's betrayal (4.391–393):

> ὣς φάτ᾽ ἀναζείουσα βαρὺν χόλον· ἵετο δ᾽ ἥ γε
> νῆα καταφλέξαι διά τ᾽ †ἔμπεδα† πάντα κεάσσαι,
> ἐν δὲ πεσεῖν αὐτὴ μαλερῷ πυρί.
>
> [Thus she spoke, seething with bitter rage. She longed to burn up the ship, to destroy everything †completely†, and to throw herself into the raging fire.]

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return to Virgil's passage later, p. 231/201.

212 See later, p. 231/201.

213 A ritual form of slaughter normally practiced by someone who believes to have been wronged – an assumption more operative for Dido than for Medea at this stage: Glotz 1904: 62-64, Delcourt 1939: 162.

214 'Brotherly slaughter' is evoked, in a quite different, but still intriguing sense, at 4.21: *sparsos fraterna caede penates*. Hosidius Geta's *Medea* (9) applies the expression to her own killing of Absyrtus, whose ghost makes an interesting, if all too brief, appearance in the play (390-391).

215 *Absumere* appears to be used frequently of multiple deaths, cf. *OLD s. v.* 7 (a), (c).

216 A similar effect, as Philip Hardie suggests, may be traced in the early mention of *Syrtis* in Book 1 (see above n. 127).

217 Bremmer 1997: 86. Later sources resurrect this version of the myth, see Bremmer 1997: 86 n. 11 (but Callimachus fr. 8 Pfeiffer does not bear Bremmer's reading: D'Alessio 1996: 389 n. 53).

218 A.R. 4.391-481; Eur. *Medea* 167, 1334. Cf. Pease on 4.600 and Mastronarde 2002: 47–48.

219 Nelis 2001: 168, with further bibliography.

The image also reinforces the thematic coherence of this central part of the book[220]. At 407–409 the verb *fervere* evoked the Trojans' sedulous preparations which Dido watches in despair (408 *cernenti*); later, at 566–567, Mercury warns Aeneas that if he lingers any further at Carthage he will wake up to see the shores alive with flames (*videbis / conlucere faces, iam fervere litora flammis*); at 594 Dido, in her frenzy, gives orders that the Trojan ships be set on fire (*ferte citi flammas*); and finally, at 604–605 she regrets not having burned the ships while she could[221].

The Apollonian references at 386–412 and at 600–601 frame Dido's tortuous transition from despair to resignation to hatred by evoking the most gruesome, indeed most tragic section of the *Argonautica*. Within the larger narrative compass framed by these allusions, the symmetrical intertextual references to Euripides' revengeful Medea, at 433–436 and 568, opens a troubling vista onto Dido's feelings and intentions.

[105] 9. Dido's unconscious is at the centre of our attention in the section which immediately follows her speech to Anna. After Aeneas has steadfastly refused to yield to her entreaties (437–449), distress overcomes the queen, as the first thoughts of suicide begin to crowd her mind (450–451). She performs rituals which yield ominous intimations (452–457), and begins to hallucinate: she seems to hear the voice of her dead husband Sychaeus calling her from the grave (460–461), while an owl emits mournful sounds (462–463). There follows (465–473) a detailed description of Dido's dream, especially remarkable, to begin with, because unlike other dreams in the poem it does not display any ostensible prophetic function, but is meant to offer an insight into Dido's inner feelings. Precisely because of its lack of any practical narrative purpose (this is the only 'symbolic' dream in the *Aeneid*)[222] it stands out as a crucial stage in her psychological development.

As a whole, this section of the narrative is closely comparable to an earlier part of the book[223] (lines 54–89) where Virgil describes Dido

220 On the imagery of Book 4 (in a different perspective), see Newton 1957 and Ferguson 1970. In general, Otis 1963, index *s. v.* 'symbol.'

221 Dido's impossible desire neatly parallels the Trojans' deep-seated fear as they reach Carthage's shores, when they beg of her *prohibe infandos a navibus ignis* (1.525). Their subsequent disclaimers (527–529) anticipate Dido's somewhat puzzling remarks at 4.425-427, see above p. 91.

222 Steiner 1952: 48–51, at 49.

223 For interesting aspects of Virgil's framing technique in Book 4 cf. E. L. Harrison 1976:

as she finally yields to her feelings for Aeneas (54–55 *his dictis impenso animum flammavit amore / spemque dedit dubiae menti solvitque pudorem*). After Dido performs a series of rituals whose outcome remains pointedly unclear (56–67), she is overcome by a sort of Bacchic frenzy (68–69 *uritur infelix Dido totaque vagatur / urbe furens*)[224]: the narrator compares her to a doe who is chased and eventually wounded by a pastor (71 *agens*). Dido experiences a series of hallucinations: she cannot sleep (82), constantly sees and hears Aeneas even when he is not around (83 *illum absens absentem auditque videtque*), and when she sees Ascanius she is reminded of his father (84–85 *aut gremio Ascanium genitoris imagine capta / detinet, infandum si fallere possit amorem*).

A number of specific textual pointers underlines the connection between the two passages. Note for instance the emphasis on *sola* at 82 and 467; the parallel between *relinqui* (466) and *relictis* (82), if the **[106]** latter is taken to mean 'just abandoned by Aeneas'[225]; the chasing of the pastor *agens* the doe (71) and Aeneas pursuing Dido (465 *agit*; cf. 471 *agitatus*); the analogy between *peragrat* (73) and *longam ... / ire viam* (467–468).

The evocation, at this particular juncture, of Dido's painful falling in love is especially significant. At one level, the parallelism heightens the pathos of her present predicament by recalling – just as Aeneas has irrevocably turned his back on her – the intensity of Dido's feelings, the high hopes she nurtured (note 55 *spem*), and the sacrifices she has made in order to pursue her love (again 55, *solvitque pudorem*). All this has gone horribly wrong. At the same time, the parallelism invites a retrospective evaluation of the rites Dido performed at 56–67 in order to obtain 'peace' (56 *pacem*). This has clearly not happened, and Dido's abandonment of *pudor* has not gone unpunished. The obvious negative outcome of the rites described at 450–455 belatedly fills in a detail which had not been mentioned in the earlier scene, namely whether those rites had actually succeeded. Lines 65–66 refuse to settle the question of what Dido reads, or believes she can read, in the *spirantia ... exta* (64) she inspects, offering instead an ambiguous, intentionally double-edged narratorial

101–103.

224 On Bacchic elements in various sections of the Aeneid see now Bocciolini Palagi 2007.

225 As already suggested by DServius, cf. Pease *ad loc*.

comment[226]. The space thus created between the inconclusiveness of the rites at 56–67 and the explicit negativity of those performed at 450–455 is the setting of Dido's tragedy. The *vates* who are unable to help at 65 return to haunt Dido with their ominous prophecies at 464–465. This sinister context in which past prophecies and dead husbands return to Dido in the moment of her deepest anguish indirectly raises the issue of her culpability, as readers are reminded that the placatory rites she attempted failed to achieve their goal.

Sychaeus plays an unexpectedly large role in this section (457–465):

praeterea fuit in tectis de marmore templum
coniugis antiqui, miro quod honore colebat,
velleribus niveis et festa fronde revinctum:
hinc exaudiri voces et verba vocantis
[107]
visa viri, nox cum terras obscura teneret,
solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo
saepe queri et longas in fletum ducere voces;
multaque praeterea vatum praedicta priorum
terribili monitu horrificant.

[Moreover, there was in the palace a marble chapel to her former lord, which she cherished in wondrous honour, wreathing it with snowy fleeces and festal foliage. Thence she heard, it seemed, sounds and speech as of her husband calling, whenever darkling night held the world; and alone on the housetops with ill-boding song the owl would oft complain, drawing out its lingering notes into a wail; and likewise many a saying of the seers of old terrifies her with fearful boding.]

Much as Dido (and the narrator) describe his 'return' in ostensibly affectionate terms (note for instance 458 *colebat* and 459 *festa*), his coming back to centre stage can hardly be reassuring. Indeed, as an uncanny revenant – this is his second appearance to Dido since his death –[227] who implicitly reasserts his rights over his former wife, Sychaeus' voice physically embodies the powerful sense of guilt which begins

226 As O'Hara 1993 well shows.
227 On the first, shortly after his death, see later n. 243.

to grip Dido at this stage[228]: the text suggests a disturbing contiguity between his *voces* and those of the owl, a bird traditionally associated with the underworld and the dead, who now emits a *ferale carmen*. Dido rediscovers the sense of guilt which she experienced, but silenced, at the onset of her passion for Aeneas. Now this guilt is externalised, and materialised in the ghost of her dead husband, whose memory she has betrayed, and who has come back to reclaim her (460–461 *vocantis* /… *viri*)[229]. Now the predictions of the *vates*, long unclear or misinterpreted, resurface as Dido (and the readers) come to realise the glaring absence of any positive omen since the very inception of her love story with Aeneas[230]. As Sychaeus calls from the grave, he unexpectedly realizes the *adynata* which Dido relied upon in her initial oath (4.24–29):

> 'sed mihi vel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat
> vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,
> pallentis umbras Erebo noctemque profundam,
> **[108]**
> ante, pudor, quam te violo aut tua iura resolvo.
> ille meos, primus qui me sibi iunxit, amores
> abstulit; ille habeat secum servetque sepulcro.'
>
> ['... But rather, I would pray, may earth yawn for me to its depths, or may the Almighty Father hurl me with his bolt to the shades – the pale shades and abysmal night in Erebus – before, Shame, I violate you or break your laws! He who first linked me to himself has taken away my heart; may he keep it with him, and guard it in the grave!']

Lines 457–465 precipitate a poignant comparison between Dido's two marriages. The reference to Sychaeus in *coniugis antiqui* (458) recalls *coniugium antiquum* at 431, thus establishing a marked contrast between

228 Moles 1987 adroitly disentangles the issue of Dido's guilt (cf. also Moles 1984).

229 Ovid (*Her*. 7.101–102) significantly emphasises this point: *hinc ego me sensi noto quater ore citari; / ipse sono tenui dixit 'Elissa, veni!'* (note the force of *cito*, with its legal implications).

230 One may wonder whether at line 464 the reading *piorum* (attested in **M**, and known to Servius) doesn't have more going for it than the near-unanimous consensus of modern editors for *priorum* (**F P** Lactantius) would suggest. In support of *piorum* cf. 6.662 *pii vates*, and Mackail; *contra*, among others, J. Henry and Pease.

the lasting bond between Dido and her first husband and the short-lived *coniugium* of sorts she enjoyed with Aeneas[231]. The verbal coincidence is all the more fascinating because of the ambiguity of *coniugium antiquum* – is Dido referring here to the relationship she used to enjoy with Aeneas in the past[232], before his betrayal, or to the 'old-fashioned marriage' she is willing to forgo in exchange for a little more time together, a less formalised relationship[233]? The contrast is further carried through in the decoration of the altar: Sychaeus' is adorned *festa fronde* (459), while shortly afterwards Dido will place Aeneas' portrait on a pyre covered *fronde … / funerea* (506–507). Finally, the owl singing from the top of the house (462 *culminibus*) a dirge whose lugubrious sound is conveyed by the abundance of *u* sounds in lines 459–462[234], invites comparison with the ululations of the Nymphs from above the cave where Dido **[109]** and Aeneas consummated their union (168 *summo vertice*)[235]. The whole section, in other words, is shot through with the typical features of a well-established theme, the wedding-as-funeral[236], which will also play an important role in Dido's dream[237] **[194]** (= SIFC 2/2008).

9. Dido's dream, probably the most famous in Latin literature, is central to the economy of Book 4[238]. Structurally, it is located in a highly

231 Silius glosses *coniugis antiqui* with *curas … priores* at 8.146–147 (part of the *Additamentum Aldinum*, see above p. 98): *me quoque fors dulci quondam vir notus amore / expectat curas cupiens aequare priores* (*aequare* hints phonically at *antiqui*).

232 When Dido meets Sychaeus in the Underworld, he is once again her *coniunx … pristinus* (6.473): at least in death, she has been able to undo history.

233 In such a densely textured set of lines it is not out of place to notice one more instance of polysemy: *quod prodidit oro* intriguingly conceals – yet voices – the 'unconscious' (and metrically impossible – not a problem for wordplay [Ahl 1985: 56]) *quod prodidi TORO* (an anticipation of 4.496–497 *lectumque iugalem / quo perii*; for *torus* as an instrument of betrayal cf. Prop. 3.20.25 *pollueritque novo sacra marita toro*). For a comparable example of 'acoustic intratext' at *Aen*. 7.122–123 (*hic domus, haec patria est, genitor mihI TALIA namque / (nunc repeto) Anchises fatorum arcana reliquit*) and 4.408 (*quis tibi tum, Dido, cernentI TALIA sensus*) see Schork 1996. At 4.408 Servius tantalisingly remarks: *totum hic magna prosphonesi dictum est: plus enim est in re quam in verbis: quamvis enim totum dictum non sit, tamen et cogitatur et capitur ab auditore*.

234 Also noticeable in Ennius *Ann*. 45-46 V.² = 43-44 Sk.: *voce, videtur, verbis*.

235 Cf. Ov. *Met*. 6.430-432 (the wedding of Procne and Tereus): *Eumenides tenuere faces de funere raptas, / Eumenides stravere torum, tectoque profanus / incubuit bubo thalamique in culmine sedit*.

236 Seaford 1987.

237 See later, p. 228/197.

238 I propose to discuss elsewhere the theoretical issues raised by a treatment of literary dreams in psychoanalytic terms.

charged central area of the narrative, where the main events of the interaction between Dido and Aeneas have already taken place, but the dénouement of the story is still uncertain. As just noted, this dream is focused on Dido's inner feelings and emotions rather than concerned with providing orders, advice, or forecasts[239]. It would be simplistic to oppose the 'prophetic' dreams of epic to the more psychological dreams of tragedy, but there is no doubt that tragedy does display a more marked tendency to represent states of nightmarish emotional distress and consequent cognitive uncertainty on the part of the characters – not necessarily of the audience[240]. However, since Dido's dream is complemented by explicit references to two famous tragic archetypes, Pentheus and Orestes, and – remarkably – mentions the scenic nature of these models (*scaenis* at 4.471 signals the imminent closure of the tragic space opened up by *scaena* at 1.164)[241], the **[195]** tension between different generic affiliations is set up as a key issue for interpretation. I would suggest that the text underscores the tragic nature of Dido's dream less to emphasise Dido's plight than to encourage an interpretive strategy attuned to the complexities of tragic texts. This far into Book 4, there can be no doubt left that Dido's story is constructed as a tragedy, and such an explicit self-referential declaration, remarkable as it still is, would add little to what readers have already realised over the past few hundred lines. The overtly tragic nature of the dream, on the other hand, requires an interpretation as complex and multilayered as the ones normally elicited by tragic texts themselves, and the absence of an interpreting character within the narrative underlines the point that this task is left completely to the readers. The dream does not convey a clear-cut message, nor does it indicate a specific course of action. Rather, it gives voice, in a suitably intricate and logically 'perverse' fashion, to a set of emotions and instincts which the previous part of the book had

239 Steiner 1952: 48–51, at 49.

240 Medea's dream in A.R. 3.616–635, with its subtle combination of disparate elements, would be enough to dispose of too neat a contrast.

241 Lucretius provides a theoretical explanation of this phenomenon at 4.962–1017, with special reference to performances and the *scaena* (983) at 973-983: see Cucchiarelli 1994: 64 with nn. 39–41, 69 with n. 49. Freud will discuss the construction of the dream in terms of 'staging' (Freud 1906: 59), or of a 'scenic situation' ('szenische Situation') arranged through the process of 'secondary revision', which functions as an author / director of sorts and makes the dream intelligible (Freud 1923: 120). See later, p. 227–28/197.

only implicitly, tangentially revealed. We cannot escape the interpretive challenge the dream poses, yet at the same time we are unlikely to avoid the peculiar form of interpretive frustration which is intrinsic to tragic texts, unaccustomed as they are to offering unambiguous resolutions.

Dido dreams that in her fury (*furentem*) she is pursued by Aeneas 'in atto d'odio'[242] (*ferus*). She flees alone, almost an exile from her own land[243], wandering in search of the compatriots who have now abandoned her (we know that they reacted unfavourably to her relationship, and at 321 Dido, admittedly in a highly charged emotional **[196]** outburst, refers to the Tyrians as her 'foes' – *infensi Tyrii*). This poignant dream is glossed by two similes (465–473):

> agit ipse furentem
> in somnis ferus Aeneas, semperque relinqui
> sola sibi, semper longam incomitata videtur
> ire viam et Tyrios deserta quaerere terra,
> Eumenidum veluti demens videt agmina Pentheus
> et solem geminum et duplices se ostendere Thebas,
> aut Agamemnonius scaenis agitatus Orestes,
> armatam facibus matrem et serpentibus atris
> cum fugit ultricesque sedent in limine Dirae.
>
> [In her sleep fierce Aeneas himself drives her in her frenzy; and ever she seems to be left lonely, ever wending, companionless, an endless way, and seeking her Tyrians in a land forlorn—even as raving Pentheus sees the Bacchants' bands, and a double sun and twofold Thebes rise to view; or as when Agamemnon's son, Orestes, hounded on stage by the Furies, flees from his mother,

242 Pascoli's plastic translation (cf. Traina 1989: 99).

243 Cf. Eur. *Med.* 278–279, which metaphorically introduces the themes of flight and pursuit. Apollonius' Medea will interpret her departure from Colchis to marry Jason as exile (Hunter 1987: 137). In Ovid, Dido explicitly considers herself an exile from Tyre: *exul agor, cineresque viri patriamque relinquo, / et feror in dubias hoste sequente vias* (*Her.* 7.115–116). Virgil himself pointed in this direction at 1.357 *tum celerare fugam patriaque excedere suadet*, where *patria excedere* foreshadows Ovid's *exul*. Dido's status as an exile reinforces the similarities with Aeneas' own plight (cf. *Aen.* 3.10–11 *litora cum patriae lacrimans portumque relinquo / … feror exsul in altum*; and Sychaeus' appearance as a ghost at 1.353-359, warning Dido to depart, parallels Hector's at 2.270–297), but may also signal a further reference to Medea (see now Battistella 2007). Of course, Anna, as Dido's double, will be an actual exile.

who is armed with brands and black serpents, while at the doorway crouch avenging Fiends.]

The logic and contents of this remarkable sequence deserve close attention[244]. The most relevant feature of the dream proper is its symmetry: Aeneas pursues Dido who pursues the *Tyrii*, and is thus at the same time object and subject of a chase, both passive and active agent. The assonance between *ferus* and *furentem* reinforces this effect, which is of paramount importance. Symmetry, in fact, paves the way to specularity, as Dido's actions in the dream suggest a close parallel with Aeneas', and internal echoes make it clear that we are invited to perceive Dido's and Aeneas' fates as very similar. *Deserta quaerere terra* (sc. *Tyrios*) at line 468 echoes Aeneas' statement at the opening of Book 3, when he declares that after the destruction of Troy *diversa exilia et desertas quaerere terras* / *auguriis agimur divom* 'we are driven by heaven's auguries to seek distant scenes of exile in waste lands' (3.4–5). The connection between the two passages extends to the repetition of the verb *ago*, while *auguriis agimur divom* is echoed in the lines immediately preceding the dream, at 4.464–465 (*multaque praeterea vatum praedicta priorum* / *terribili monitu horrificant* 'and likewise many a saying of the seers of old terrifies her with fearful boding'). Finally, Dido's statement that – in her dream – she is 'seeking the Tyrians through a desert land' recalls Aeneas' own declaration to Venus in disguise once he has reached Carthage: *ipse ignotus*, *egens*, *Libyae deserta peragro*, / *Europa et Asia pulsus* 'Myself unknown and destitute, I wander over the Libyan wastes, driven from Europe and from Asia' (1.384–385).

[197] These elements of similarity and specularity are not wholly unexpected, since the resemblance between the two main characters is a structural feature of the *Aeneid*, as we are invited to consider from the first time they are introduced, in Book 1[245]. In the present context, however, this mirroring is especially significant, for it represents a typical

244 See Krevans 1993: 265–271; Walde 2001: 285–287. Khan 1996 offers a clever analysis in the context of a wide-ranging discussion of Dido's 'rebounding curse.' Oliensis 1997: 305-306, and 2001: 48–51 focus (independently from Khan) on the theme of maternal aggression in the dream and the simile, a topic on which see also Suzuki 1989: 114–118. Further remarks in Bowie 1998: 72-73. On Aeneas' acute Oedipal troubles see Reckford 1996.

245 On specularity and desire see Rimell 2006, esp. 34-35 on the *Aeneid*.

feature of the logic of the unconscious, which allows the co-presence of contradictory elements (Dido as subject and object, for instance), and is apt to favour identification over individuation. In our case, Dido and Aeneas both belong to the category of 'fleeing and pursuing' subjects, despite the fact that they are, of course, very different characters. In the context of a dream whose logical patterns are symmetry and identification we are naturally led to wonder whether emotions assigned to one character can also be ascribed to the other: this confusion of roles inevitably raises questions as to the overall meaning of the dream, and especially about the characterization of Dido's inner feelings at this highly dramatic juncture. For instance, since Aeneas' chase is presented as an hostile act, an aggressive connotation may be seen to extend to Dido's actions as well, which would thus echo her promise at 384–386 – *sequar atribus ignibus absens* / ... *omnibus umbra locis adero*[246] 'Though far away, I will chase you with murky brands ... everywhere my shade shall haunt you'. We should nonetheless be sceptical about Schrader's simplifying emendation of *Tyrios* into *Teucros* at 468, while recognizing that the assonance allows the text to echo, *sous rature*, this interesting alternative.

Inversion also plays a crucial role[247]: Dido imagines that she is being pursued by Aeneas, and in fact at 6.450–451 she is still 'wandering **[198]** in the great forest' (*errabat silva in magna*)[248], while in reality it is Aeneas who is fleeing from her, even the Tyrians have left her, and she – the

246 For a similar reflexive pattern see the dream of the Erinyes in Aesch. *Eum*. 94–142, with Devereux 1976: 150–167, esp. 155.

247 Already ancient authors were aware that dreams may express the opposite of what they ostensibly represent, cf. Plin. *ep*. 1.18.2 *refert tamen, eventura soleas an contraria somniare. mihi reputanti somnium meum istud, quod times tu, egregiam actionem portendere videtur* 'But it makes a difference whether your dreams usually come true or not, for to judge by a dream of my own, the one which has frightened you might well foretell that you will be successful', with Bettini 1986: 161–167. Freud reflects at length on the role of inversion in dreams as a means to dissimulate censored emotions: Freud 1900: 141–142, and, specifically about dreams of punishment, Freud 1900: 557. The theoretical perspective I advocate, however, insists more on the co-presence of alternative meanings than on inversion tout court, see later in the text.

248 Timaios of Tauromenion (fr. 82 Jacoby = 23 Müller) claims that Dido was so called in the local language 'because of her extensive wandering' (διὰ τὴν πολλὴν πλάνην). In fact Dido's name may be connected with the Semitic root for 'to wander' (Hexter 1992: 348, Lipinski 1995: 409, Jacobson 2005a). Dido is called *errans* by Iarbas at 4.211. But note also that 'wandering' is typical of Maenads in their bacchic frenzy, see for instance Eur. *Ba*. 148. For a different etymological explanation see n. 93.

leader of her people – is now forced to seek them out. *Relinqui*, *incomitata* and *sola* stress her sense of isolation and loneliness. The queen who was escorted by a throng of youths (1.497 *incessit magna iuvenum stipante caterva*), is now *incomitata*[249]. While the haunting imagery in this passage overturns the conventions of elegiac pursuit[250], the overall poignancy of the setting is increased by the Ennian intertext, which is here at its clearest: *ita sola* / ... *errare videbar* / *tardaque vestigare et quaerere te neque posse* / *corde capessere* 'Then alone ... I seemed to wander and to track with slow foot and seek you but was unable to embrace you' (39–42 Sk.). Ilia's is a dream of seduction, while Dido's is one of abandonment and loneliness, which will lead not to the founding, but to the ultimate destruction of a city[251].

The similes that follow expand, complicate and at the same time shed light on some of the implications of the dream itself. The connection between the dream and the similes is problematic[252]. The text does not settle the issue whether the comparison between Dido and Pentheus and Orestes occurs to Dido herself in her dream or represents a free association on the part of the narrator: *veluti* at line 469 neatly defers a final decision on the issue, and leaves open the question of whether the narrator is simply continuing to report the dream as it 'truly' happened, or is blending in his own interpretation by way of **[199]** mythological comparison. Since Dido's dream is – needless to say – fictional, why would the author distinguish between the two voices – Dido's and the narrator's – at this stage? The epistemic implications of the ambiguity are nonetheless important. On the one hand, I believe that the similes share in the logical and expressive patterns of the dream, yet, in so far as they read at a different narrative level than the dream itself, they suggest that they are conveying a more authoritative interpretation. There is no doubt, in any case, that the various images (Dido fleeing,

249 The opposite, for instance, of *claro comitari Hymenaeo* at Lucr.1.97 (which, however, is also poignantly negative). In a different context, Medea is *incomitata* at Ov. *Met*. 7.185, but note another clear echo of Dido's description at 7.183 (cf. n. 354). Cf. also Ov. *Her*. 12.135-36 *comitata* ... / ... *amore tui*, which upsets an elegiac topos (see Bessone *ad loc*.).

250 Cf. Khan 1996: 5-6.

251 See Krevans 1993: 270. A final twist: in Ennius Ilia is Aeneas' daughter.

252 Ilia's dream in Ennius is similarly divided into three loosely connected parts. According to Cicero this adds an element of realism to the description: Cic. *Div*. 1.42 with Krevans 1993: 258–259.

Aeneas pursuing, Pentheus hallucinating, Orestes pursued) are welded together, almost as if those renowned examples of tragic fury could have occurred to Dido in her sleep together with – indeed as – a representation of her forlorn self. The diffraction of the dreamer's self into a number of characters is typical of dreams. As Freud points out, this comes as a result of the secondary elaboration, which strives to eliminate a 'multiplicity of selves' which 'does not fit in with any type of scenic situation'[253]. Once again, Dido appears to be following a logic typical of dreams: she may even be said to be 'seeing double' – as Pentheus does in an explicit reference to Euripides[254]. In the *Bacchae*, Pentheus' cognitive disorder is the beginning of his demise. Here, it points to a confusion of categories which is loaded with emotion, and opens up complex strategies of signification.

Whether oneiric distortion is directly (so to speak) at work here, or whether it is mimicked by the narrator's choice of images, the selection and treatment of the mythological comparanda are in any event intriguing. In the first one a parallel is established between Dido and Pentheus on the one hand, and, consequently, between Aeneas and the Eumenides on the other. The general emphasis on the cognitive and emotional distress of both Dido and Pentheus (note the use of *demens*[255] and Pentheus' 'seeing double') is readily understandable, but since the specific focus of the preceding dream is Dido being pur- **[200]** sued by Aeneas the gender reversal is at least unexpected[256]. Why are two men chosen as parallels for Dido's traumatic experience, and not, say, a female character such as Io, whose wanderings in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*[257] offer a very close parallel, at times even a verbal one, to Dido's situation?[258] Moreover, Dido is distraught at her loneliness (recall *sola* and *incomitata*), while both Pentheus and Orestes suffer from

253 Freud 1923: 120.

254 Cf. *Ba*. 918–922, esp. 918.

255 The use of *demens* underlines different stages of Dido's emotional turmoil. She was described as *demens* at line 78 by the narrator, when love makes her seek Aeneas' company and narratives more and more; and she applies the adjective to herself at 374, as she realizes that she should have resisted him.

256 In his hallucination at *Ba*. 925-926 Pentheus wishes to appear similar to Ino and Agave, who 'after all' is his own mother (926).

257 Cf. esp. Io's description of the gadfly pursuing her at 571-587.

258 There was also an Apollonian (3.275–277) hint ready to be developed, as Valerius will do: Hershkowitz 1998: 30-34.

a diametrically opposite problem, being pursued by a throng of hostile creatures, notably female ones. Even if Pentheus and Dido share family connections[259], why does the simile establish an identification between Pentheus and Dido if the latter has already been likened twice in Book 4 to Pentheus' antagonists, the Bacchic women (300–303 and 376, cf. 384)?

We see at work in an amplified version the symmetry and specularity which we already detected in the dream. Indeed, we seem to be dealing with a remarkable example of 'symmetrical logic'[260], whereby categorical distinctions are elided. Dido may well be likened to Pentheus in her passive role as a prey being chased, but the text, faithful, in this respect as well, to the logic of 'seeing double', also invites us to entertain an identification between *Aeneas* and Pentheus, with Dido as one of the Eumenides actively pursuing the lover who has betrayed her. This option is much encouraged, in general terms, by the gender realignment which would thus ensue, and, more specifically, by Dido's characterization as *furens* throughout Book 4, especially after she has been betrayed: the dream itself opens with *furentem* at 465 and the narrative resumes with *concepit furias* at 474. We, as readers, are asked to 'see double', that is to regard Dido, on the one hand, as a victim of aggression, like Pentheus, but also, on the other, as a Fury who pur- **[201]** sues her victim Pentheus. Indeed, when later in the book Dido explicitly regrets that she hasn't cut Aeneas into pieces while she could (600–601), the *sparagmos* brings to mind not only Absyrtus', but also Pentheus' own fate[261]. There are other implications of the simile which I will pursue in a moment, but let me stress again that I am proposing to entertain these two options simultaneously, without discarding the one explicitly stated in the text in favour of the encrypted alternative, forceful as it may be.

Similar considerations apply to the second mythological example, which establishes a link between Orestes and Dido on the one hand, and Clytemnestra, the Furies and Aeneas on the other. In this case the suggestion that we should actually reverse the chain of associations is even stronger, given the explicit connection which the text invites

259 Pentheus' grandfather, Agenor, was Belus' twin brother. For Carthage as *Agenoris urbem* cf. *Aen*. 1.338, and for Belus as founder of Dido's dynasty *Aen*. 1.729–730: Khan 1996: 13.

260 Matte Blanco's 1975 ground-breaking concept.

261 See later p. 235/205.

between, on the one hand, Clytemnestra *armatam facibus … et serpentibus atris* (472) and Dido as an avenging Fury chasing Aeneas 'with murky brands' (384 *sequar atris ignibus*); and, on the other, between the *ultrices … Dirae* who oppose Orestes (473) and the ones Dido will shortly invoke in her final curse at 610[262].

Both mythological examples, then, seem to invite a double reading, for the association between Aeneas and Pentheus and Orestes on the one hand and that of Dido with the Eumenides, Clytemnestra and the *ultrices Dirae* on the other is too strong to be silenced by the counterintuitive alternative displayed in the text. Through a process of projection, condensation and displacement typical of the 'symmetrical' logic of dreams, both mythological examples, then, foreground the role of destructive women. While Dido sees herself as an object of Aeneas' cruel pursuit, she also experiences feelings of aggression and revenge which find their expression (direct or otherwise) in the description of Pentheus' and Orestes' fate. Orestes, in particular, is pursued by *Dirae* who promise retribution for his killing of Clytemnestra, and are probably depicted here in the act of preventing **[202]** his escape (note *cum fugit*), just as Dido would like to be able to detain Aeneas at Carthage. The text offers a powerful fantasy of role-reversal and punishment which underscores Dido's emotional complexity at this stage in her demise.

It is important to stress that the specular nature of the dream does not allow us to reverse and discard its ostensible logic, uncompelling as it may appear. Meaning resides both in the image explicitly pictured in the text[263], and the alternatives it suggests by way of internal and intertextual references, linguistic 'faultlines', phonic patterns. What we should seek to reconstruct is a dynamic stratigraphy of meanings, where each and every aspect or level of the text is indispensable to the creation of an overall meaning.

The logic of the dream and that of the similes which complement it casts Aeneas, not Dido, in the role of Eumenides which pursue Pentheus, as well as the Furies, and Clytemnestra, who are out to attack

262 The theme is exploited, for instance, by Cicero, *Pro S. Rosc.* 66–67, *In Pis.* 46–47. Lucan compares the intensity of Caesar's dream at 7.777–780 to the hallucinations of Orestes and Pentheus.

263 Interesting parallels connect Dido to Orestes, see Foster 1973-74: 37; Schiesaro 2005: 96.

Orestes. The explicit focus of the comparison is the Eumenides' and Furies' aggressive stance as relentless pursuers, but the specific plots from which the similes are drawn characterise this 'aggression' as, in fact, a form of punishment. Both Euripides' *Bacchae*, and, even more directly, *Orestes*, centre on error and punishment: Orestes is, after all, a matricide, and Pentheus has been unable to recognise and yield to the superior force of a powerful god. Categories such as 'innocence' and 'guilt' are infinitely controversial when applied to tragic characters and their deeds, but neither Orestes nor Pentheus, in their different ways, are wholly innocent characters. Again, Io would have offered a more straightforward example of a wronged female cruelly and inexplicably punished through no fault of hers. As it is, the explicit association with Pentheus and Orestes suggests that, in the mixed-up world of oneiric distortion, Dido appears to experience, or is credited with, a plurality of roles and emotions, including, arguably, a sense of guilt which could be explained both as a self-accusing introjection of Aeneas's betrayal, but also as the consequence of her own aggressive feelings against him.

[203] In the light of this we should evaluate one of the thorniest aspects of this passage, the unexpected[264] mention of *Eumenidum agmina* instead of the Maenades at 469. Eumenides, Erinyes and Maenades share many a common feature[265], but the Furies do not normally play a part in Pentheus' story, even if hints in this direction may perhaps have been found in Pacuvius' *Pentheus*[266] and a Erinys-like character (perhaps Lyssa) is to be recognised in visual representations of Pentheus' myth[267]. However, rather than chasing the faint traces of a possible alternative tradition in which the Eumenides do replace the Maenades in connection with Pentheus' plight, we should first of all seek out reasons for the

264 As pointed out – e.g. – by Mackail on 469–474.

265 Gossens 1946.

266 Ribbeck 1875: 281, Stabryla 1970: 49–50, Setaioli 1998: 140–141 and n. 91, with further bibl. Cf. also Bocciolini Palagi 2001 (= 2007: 17–36), D'Anna 1959: 220–226. The connection between Ov. *Met*. 3.513-715 and the plot of Pacuvius' *Pentheus* as (perhaps) gleaned from DServ on *Aen*. 4.469 is disputed: see now Schierl 2006: 419–420.

267 Cf. a fragment of Apulian pottery from 360 b. C. (*LIMC s. v.* 'Pentheus' n. 13 (cf. also n. 17 = 'Lyssa' n. 17), and, more clearly, a painting of the House of Vettii in Pompeii (70 AD, but from a Greek original of the end of the Vth century: *LIMC s. v.* 'Pentheus' n. 28 = 'Lyssa' n. 18). Cf. also the representation of an Erinys (?) in a Bacchic context in the Villa dei Misteri (Ist cent. AD: *LIMC s. v.* 'Erinys' n. 89). Note, incidentally, that Medea is called an Erinys at Eur. *Med*. 1260.

substitution in the internal economy of Virgil's text[268]. The connection which can readily be established between Dido and the Furies is not in itself a sufficient explanation for the shift from Maenades to Eumenides, since elsewhere in the book Dido is also likened to a Bacche[269]. Surely the 'confusion' between Eumenides and Maenades is an indication of Dido's perturbed mental state[270], and in any case dreams are not expected to be factually impeccable. But I believe that the 'slip', which thanks to the assonance between the two terms still manages to evoke the more expected terms, is nonethe- **[204]** less highly significant, and we should concentrate on the differential meaning introduced into the text by the choice of the Eumenides as part of this tableau. The Eumenides are, specifically, avenging Furies, specialising in the punishment of family crimes: it is in this capacity that Catullus' Ariadne invokes them against Theseus in her elaborate request for revenge (64.193–202) *multantes vindice poena* / *Eumenides* (193–194). In the implicit logic of the dream, Dido's identification with the Eumenides can thus be regarded as a form of displacement of responsibility, since it substitutes the irrational violence of Agave and the Bacchae with Furies directly involved in the punishment of heinous family crimes[271]. However, in the explicit logic of the simile, which pairs the Eumenides with Aeneas, the particular connotation of these mythical avengers appears to justify (to a degree) Aeneas' aggressive stance. The simile would thus voice the emergence

268 As rightly advocated by Stok 2004.

269 The analogy between Dido and a Bacche is a recurrent motif in the book, interestingly providing a unifying element between different phases of Dido's plight before and after Aeneas' betrayal. Her language also reveals at times unusual features which can be seen as the stylistic correlate of bacchic emotion: see e.g. line 327, with Soubiran 1961: 37 and Schiesaro 2005: 91 and n. 25; and, for this phenomenon in general, Weber 2002.

270 Stok 2004: 430.

271 An interesting parallel can be established with an important episode in Book 7, where Allecto brings war between Trojans and Latins by inflaming, first of all, Amata. Critics have wondered why Virgil chooses a Furia – a chthonic creature normally connected with avenging family crimes – to perform the role of Discordia. Virgil's choice may point to a tradition, mentioned by Servius but otherwise ignored in the poem, according to which Amata slaughtered her two sons because they had sided with Aeneas (on *Aen*. 7.51: 'per transitum tangit historiam. Amata enim duos filios, voluntate patris Aeneas spondentes sorores, factione interemit'): Setaioli 1998: 134–135. Virgil suppresses this version of the events (7.50-51), which, according to Servius, resurfaces in the use of *eripio* at 7.51 (*unde et 'erepta'* [sc. *iuventa*] *dixit*, *quasi per vim*).

of feelings of guilt on the part of Dido. But the symmetrical logic of the dream reveals that guilt, punishment and aggression are not neatly confined to either one of the main characters of the story. Significantly, Seneca appears to be aware of the potentially symmetrical force of revenge to which we are alerted by the dream. His Medea invokes the Furies at the outset of the play (13–18), and when they appear on stage (or are at least said to be appearing to her) at 958–967 we at first assume that they are coming to help Medea perform her revenge (952–953), before discovering that they are accompanied by the spectre of Absyrtus, whose murder they avenge by forcing Medea to kill one of her children (964 *frater est*, *poenas petit*).

Through a process of projection and condensation typical of the 'symmetrical' logic of dreams, the similes in the stories of Pentheus **[205]** and Orestes magnify the role of destructive females – Agave and Clytemnestra – both of whom kill or try to kill their sons: the spectre of Medea (and Procne) is once again not very far from the surface, much as Dido and the narrator rely on the misleading potential of dream-logic in order to displace and neutralise this connection. But the text vigorously resists the repressive force of displacement: indeed, the very prominence assigned to Orestes' patronymic – *Agamemnonius* – evokes even a third male character whose actions have attracted a violent punishment on the part of a wronged female[272]. Dido has projected onto Aeneas the intentions and feelings she nurtures herself.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that a number of details in lines 465–473 refer, in a negative and ominous fashion, to wedding imagery. Directly after the section (457–465) in which Dido's previous marriage to Sychaeus is evoked, these details appear to suggest that, in contrast to her union with Sychaeus, Dido has now come to regard her 'marriage' to Aeneas as a catastrophic event ridden with guilt. Note how (i) the *faces* (472) recall the nuptial *taedae*; (ii) the mention of *limen* recalls an important aspect of marriage ritual, which plays a role in Book 4 as well: Dido's hesitating *ad limina* as she goes out to meet Aeneas (133) has considerable emotional importance[273]; (iii) the Eumenides and Dirae

272 Khan 1996: 20.

273 Segal 1990. The positioning near or at the *limen* is ominous, since it is typical of the Furies, as for instance at 4.473 (*sedent in limine Dirae*), Allecto at 7.343 (*tacitumque obsedit limen Amatae*), the Eumenides at 6.279, Tisiphone at 6.554-56 (for the last

are the thoroughly negative counterparts of the already ambivalent Nymphae who presided over the marriage-in-the-cave (168). Ovid's Dido will explicitly establish the identification: *nymphas ululasse putavi – / Eumenides fati signa dedere mei!* 'I thought it a cry of the nymphs—'twas the Eumenides sounding the signal for my doom!' (*Her*. 7.95–96)[274]; (iv) Dido 'conceives', not a child, but **[206]** *furias* (474)[275]. The most catastrophic of weddings was presided over by Menis and Erinys, that of Paris and Helen[276] as described by the chorus in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (685–762)[277]. The offspring of that union (759 τίκτει) is a string of disasters, and indeed the ultimate cause of the tragic fate befalling on Dido.

10. Dido, we remarked above, appears to be oblivious to a very basic need to differentiate and distinguish. Incestuous drives are an especially potent (and poignant) manifestation of this obliviousness, and Dido seems to experience them with peculiar intensity and variety, collapsing the instincts of the most notorious paradigms of incest which mythology had to offer. Aeneas is at the same time Absyrtus to Dido's Medea, Hippolytus to her Phaedra, Itys to her Procne[278], both brother and son. Going beyond the erotic and sexual dimension of incest, we ought to recognise that the inability or unwillingness to break up reality into well-defined separate categories affects a wider spectrum of human activities, not just familial and affective relations, and fleshes out a

two examples cf. Suzuki 1989: 96 n. 7, in connection with Helen's – *Troiae et patriae communis Erinys* (2.573) – occupying the *limina* of Vesta's temple at 2.567). For the sexual implications of *limen* see Adams 1982: 89.

274 The verb *ululare* has specific Bacchic overtones, cf. e.g. Liv. 39.10, Curt. 8.10.18, Sen. *dial*. 7.26.8, Stat. *Silv*. 4.2.49, Iuv. 6.316, Serv. on *Aen*. 1.257 with *OLD s. v.* and Pease on 4.168. It is also used in reference to bacchic-like characters such as Canidia (Hor. *Sat*. 1.8.25); a *thiasus* (Cat. 63.28); Agave (Ov. *Met*. 7.190); Circe (Ov. *Met*. 14.405). For its Greek counterpart ὀλολύζω cf. Eur. *Ba*. 689, with Page on *Ba*. 24. At A.R. 1218 the verb is used to describe the reaction of the Nymphs to the epiphany of Hecate.

275 Cf. Medea in Ov. *Her*. 12.208: *ingentes parturit ira minas*. A fine analysis of the Virgilian expression in Lyne 1989: 24–28.

276 On the connections between Dido and Helen see Jacobson 1987, and esp. Suzuki 1989: 103–122. On relations between the *Aeneid* and the *Oresteia*: Hardie 1991b, Hardie 1997, Galinsky 2003.

277 Seaford 1987: 123–127.

278 I discuss the aggressive implications of Dido's attitude *vis à vis* Aeneas' off-springs (both actual and potential), in Schiesaro 2005: 88–97: my argument there is part and parcel of this essay. Cf., independently, Casali (2004-05).

more systematic challenge to a rational understanding of the external world. The obsession with sameness which underlies incest is in itself a projection of the unconscious' own logic – a logic which ignores (or repudiates) the elaborate set of differences and distinctions upon which 'adult' conscious logic[279] – and, with it, social constructs – are based.

Dido's[280] challenge to the ostensible ideology of the *Aeneid* is more radical than the specific alternative she posits to Aeneas' itinerary: she stands in Virgil's poem as the most powerful incarnation **[207]** of a radically alternative world-view. Thrown on the shores of a potentially hostile land, welcomed (not without divine intervention) by a generous and attractive queen whose fate is in many respects parallel to his own, Aeneas is faced – for the first time – with a real alternative to his life's business, the search of a new homeland for his displaced people. The false foundations which dotted his earlier wanderings, even the emotional encounter with Andromache's pathetic (and pathological) solution to a similar problem – how can the defeated Trojans construct a new Troy? –, were temporary, limited, and patently unviable detours.

Carthage is different. There he can become the co-regent, effectively the king, of a prosperous new land; his people can merge with the locals; royal succession would be guaranteed by Ascanius, or, down the line, by the child he will eventually conceive with Dido, the queen he has fallen in love with: we can glimpse, tantalizingly, a totally different world-history. The text is ready to acknowledge how much Aeneas is tempted by this unexpected scenario: coming to Carthage on Jupiter's orders, Mercury finds him *fundantem arces ac tecta novantem* (260), forgetful (*oblitus*) of his reign and his mission (267). All of these developments, of course, had been planned behind the scenes by the protagonists' divine sponsors. Juno explicitly states her project of a Carthage where Trojans and Carthaginians (4.102 *communem ... populum*) may live under the supposedly joint protection of Venus and herself (4.102–103 *paribus regamus / auspiciis*). Venus is aware that the plan is yet another manifestation of Juno's attempt to forestall Aeneas' arrival in Italy (105–106)[281], and wonders whether Jupiter would approve of this elision of differences between Trojans and Tyrians: *sed fatis incerta feror, si Iuppiter*

279 I refer to a distinction first proposed by Matte Blanco 1975.

280 This and the following two paragraphs are borrowed from Schiesaro 2005: 86–87.

281 At 105 Venus accuses Juno of talking *simulata mente*.

unam / esse velit Tyriis urbem Troiaque profectis, / miscerive probet populos aut foedera iungi 'But the Fates send me adrift, uncertain whether Jupiter wills that there be one city for the Tyrians and the wanderers from Troy, or approves the blending of peoples and the league of union' (110–112)[282]. To Venus' (and Jupiter's) linear movement forward in time and space, Juno opposes delays, detours, and amalgamations of opposites.

[208] A relatively minor Carthaginian character deserves a fresh mention in this context. As we have already seen, both Ovid and Silius lend a new lease of life to Anna, whose later adventures appear to confirm by analogy that Dido had nurtured hostile intentions towards Aeneas. Anna further contributes to the characterization of Carthage as a locus of confused and inherently regressive emotions. Her very name (a palindrome), the epithet she acquires (Perenna), and her story, not only crystallize the power of repetition (albeit interpreted in a positive light by Roman religion), but show that neither the present nor the future can succeed in burying once and for all the disturbing emotions and patterns of thought which Aeneas and his Roman readers may well have preferred to confine to a distant past in a distant and different land[283]. In both Ovid and Silius Anna's story is introduced by authorial statements which highlight the extraordinary nature of the tale, and present the subsequent narrative as a difficult excavation among old and hidden tales: it is not altogether clear whether unveiling them is a pleasurable or even recommendable act[284]. Anna's unexpected arrival into Latium and her promotion to a local deity mark an upsetting continuity – indeed they add a further layer of ambiguity and confusion. Anna is fully aware of her dubious status as a Carthaginian honoured in Rome, and feels the pressure of her divided identities and allegiances.

282 Cf. also 1.574 *Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur*, which will metamorphose into Jupiter's quite different final stance: *Tros Rutulusne fuat, nullo discrimine habebo* (10.108).

283 Santini 1983 offers a fine analysis of the dialectics between mythical and historical narratives in Silius' Anna episode.

284 Cf. *Fast*. 3.543-544 *quae tamen haec dea sit quoniam rumoribus errat, / fabula proposito nulla tegenda meo* 'But since erroneous rumours are rife as to who this goddess is, I am resolved to throw no cloak about her tale' and Sil. 8.44-47 *multa retro rerum iacet atque ambagibus aevi / obtegitur densa caligine mersa vetustas, / cur Sarrana dicent Oenotri numina templo / regnisque Aeneadum germana colatur Elissae* 'Far back in history, and hidden in deep darkness by the uncertain report of antiquity, lies the answer to this question: why should the Italians consecrate a temple to a Phoenician deity, and why should Dido's sister be worshipped in the country of the Aeneadae?'.

When Juno summons her to prod Hannibal into action (it's *Aeneid* 7 all over again)[285], she squarely brings the issue to the fore: '*haud*' *inquit* '*tua ius nobis praecepta morari. / sit fas, sit tantum, quaeso, retinere favorem / antiquae patriae mandataque magna sororis, / quamquam inter Latios Annae stet numen honores*' "It is my duty to do your bidding without delay. One thing only I beg: suffer me to keep the goodwill of my former country and to carry out the solemn behests of my sister, although the deity of Anna is among those honoured by the Romans" (8.40–43)[286]. Note the contrast between the impersonal statement of the concessive clause, which rules out an active choice on Anna's part, and the deeply **[209]** felt[287] request that she be allowed not just to retain the love for her old homeland, but even that she may remain faithful to Dido's final orders, i.e. her intimation of undying hatred against the Romans[288].

The contrast between the 'Carthaginian' (or Juno's) and 'Roman' (Jupiter's) systems of thought plays itself out, in the narrative structure of the poem, at both the spatial and chronological levels, never to find an unequivocal resolution. They clearly represent more than two possible plot-lines, but involve, at a deeper level, the epistemic and psychological foundations of culture. In this respect, Jupiter and Juno, who define their own position in opposition to each other, represent the ineliminable differences which shape human experience at both the conscious and unconscious level. When the two gods finally reach an agreement of sorts and bring the poem to an end, this happens on the basis of a partial compromise which highlights mutual dependence, rather than neat opposition, between these two systems of thought. Now that Juno's alternative scenario has been defeated on the battlefield, it is Jupiter's turn to endorse the logic of ethnic mixing (12.838 *genus* ... *mixtum* ... *sanguine*), yet with concessions and distinctions which metaphorically sow the seed of future internal discord, for fusion can always only be imperfect and incomplete[289].

285 Juno's exhortation to Juturna in *Aeneid* 12 is normally cited (see Ariemma on 8.30-31), but the analogies with the Allecto episode in Book 7 seem to me more relevant.

286 Cf. also 8.220–221, 227, 239.

287 As indicated by the repeated *sit* followed by *quaeso.*

288 *Aen.* 4.622-629, which Silius' Dido recalls to Anna in her dreams at 8.173–175.

289 This time it is in Juno's interest, of course, that the fusion be imperfect and leave room for eventually calling into question again Jupiter's settlement: the Trojans will mix 'in blood only' (12.838, cf. 12.835-836 *commixti corpore tantum / subsident Teucri*), since the Latins preserve their language and 'habits' (12.825: *vestem* is a pointed

The modes of thought and action championed by each member of the divine couple chart a fundamental opposition that finds a signifi- **[210]** cant parallel in modern psychoanalytical thought, which, especially in its post-Freudian developments, has explored the opposition between the 'Aristotelian' linearity of conscious thinking and the lack of boundaries and distinctions (categorical, spatial, chronological) which characterise the logic of the unconscious[290]. Juno, the all-powerful, archaic, Saturnian goddess of impossible desires and illicit alternatives, Jupiter's opposite, and yet his wife and sister, embodies the attractions and dangers inherent in this mode of thinking – and so does, at several crucial junctures in the poem, her unlucky disciple, Dido[291].

11. The magic scene at lines 504–521 has long troubled critics[292]. Many commentators argue that the passage would have been a prime candidate for further revisions[293], and may in any case have been composed later than the rest of the book. This evaluation is based on a few stylistic oddities[294], but especially on the incongruities between this passage and the development of the plot. Only here does Dido appear to be 'building up' the pyre herself (although in this respect the ablatives absolutes at 505 are inconclusive), rather than letting Anna do so, as she had specifically requested at 495–497; there seems to be no obvious follow-up to the magic rites Dido organises at this juncture, nor do the items listed coincide perfectly with those collected later on the pyre. In particular, we find no

choice, since it recalls the Latins' jibes against the Trojans' effeminacy, esp. at 9.614-616 (on *tunicae* with sleeves cf. n. 176) and 12.53, see Traina 1997 on 12.825), yet the Trojans will also contribute an important religious element, the cult of the Penates (12.836–837 *morem ritusque sacrorum / adiciam* (Jupiter), cf. Aeneas at 12.192 *sacra deosque dabo*). Lexical choices contribute to the sense of uneasiness. *Subsido* at 12.836 arguably retains alongside its operative meaning ('to settle down'), a slightly ominous colouring ('to lie in wait (for)': cf. *OLD s. v.* 2, cf. *Aen*. 11.268 *devictam Asiam subsedit adulter*); and *genus … mixtum* had been used in Book 6 to describe the Minotaur as *Veneris monimenta nefandae* (6.25 *mixtumque genus*; there are no further occurrences of the *iunctura* in the poem).

290 Cf. esp. Matte Blanco 1975.

291 As far as time is concerned, the most intensely regressive desire is voiced by Dido at 4.550-552: *non licuit, thalami expertem sine crimine vitam / degere more ferae, talis nec tangere curas; non servata fides cineri promissa Sychaeo*, discussed by Schiesaro 2005: 97–107.

292 The best analysis of the scene is Tupet 1976: 232–266 (*contra* Setaioli 1974), to which I refer for further details. See also Ingallina 1995.

293 Austin on 515f.; Setaioli 1970: 395, with further bibliography.

294 Cf. Heinze 1915: 118 n. 54; Setaioli 1970: 395.

previous or further mention of Aeneas' *effigies* (508).

At 479 Dido had clearly stated to Anna the purpose of the impending magic rite: *quae* (sc. *via*) *mihi reddat eum, vel eo me solvat, amantem* '(to find) a way to return him to me or release me from my love for him'. This statement has usually persuaded interpreters, even if it is plainly deceptive in so far as it shields from Anna the final use of the pyre. There is a further layer of deception, too, because the rite which **[211]** Dido proceeds to prepare is hardly comparable to the usual amatory enchantments designed to bring back the affection of an unfaithful lover, or indeed to free oneself from the pains of love. Compare for instance what happens to a similar *effigies* in *Eclogue* 8. There the image is tied round with three ribbons and thrice drawn around the altar; the ribbons are explicitly defined as *Veneris ... vincula* (8.73–78), and the image's final melting is a perfect metaphor for the desired melting of Daphnis' heart. No funereal connotations attend this application of the principles of sympathetic magic, which are even spelt out at line 83: *Daphnis me malus urit, ego hanc in Daphnide laurum*[295] 'Me cruel Daphnis burns; for Daphnis burn I this laurel'. In the *Aeneid*, Dido declares that she wants to 'destroy' all traces of her hated lover (497–498 *abolere nefandi / cuncta viri monimenta iuvat*), an illogical way of securing his return. In fact, the same destructive impulse applies against Aeneas himself: as Eitrem has persuasively shown[296], Dido's action can only be considered aggressive: she intends to burn the *effigies* in a rite of sympathetic magic[297] because she intends to harm Aeneas, and does so knowing full well the implications of her actions (588 *haud ignara futuri*)[298]. Dido's own emotions are understandably ambivalent throughout, as *magicas invitam accingier artis* 'against my will I arm myself with magic arts!' (4.493) – yet another *Verneinung* – suggests[299]. Dido's words to Anna, therefore, are equivocal and misleading in more senses than one. Indeed, there is one very radical way in which Dido can 'free herself' of Aeneas –

295 The true intentions of the woman are confirmed by the parallel hardening of the clay (Faraone 1989).

296 Eitrem 1933. See now the reassessment of Eitrem's article in Kraggerud 1999.

297 For the use of small statues and other representations of the enemy in *defixiones* see Audollent 1904: lxxv-lxxx.

298 Tupet 1976: 243.

299 As Fantuzzi 2008 shows, Dido's words may also reflect on Apollonius' own nuanced attitude towards Medea's resort to magic.

by causing his death: Dido's placing of the *effigies* on a *torus* (508) certainly conjures up the image of a symbolic funeral, where the mask of the absent Aeneas is cremated in lieu of his corpse[300]. It is significant, therefore, that Dido herself decides to place the *effigies* on the pyre while she omitted to mention it to Anna just a few lines earlier.

[212] Critics have long been wary of trying to explain the complex issues connected with the coexistence of different layers of composition within the *Aeneid* simply by invoking Dido's psychological fluctuations[301]. But we should also refrain from assuming that the passage as we read it would eventually have been eliminated or altered in order to restore complete coherence to Dido's actions, thus playing down (as most recent commentators do) the importance of Dido's aggressive gesture at 506–508. At the very least we should allow for the fact that Virgil himself 'fluctuated' between different approaches to Dido's death, and that he entertained both an aggressive and a passive-aggressive option. In reality, however, there is much to gain by setting this scene in the continuum of barely repressed aggressive emotions which Dido reveals at different stages in the narrative. The unspoken desire to kill Aeneas is established as early as 435–436, is reiterated symbolically at 506–508, and surfaces again as an impossible wish at 600–601. Once we realize the continued existence of violent feelings, we should hesitate simply to ascribe the incomplete nature of 504–521 to compositional problems. Surely these lines could have received a *summa manus*, but they would not necessarily have lost a feature which coheres well with a recurrent, if often less than explicit, theme in the book.

Dido's hostile feelings clearly persist after the magic section. Tupet has convincingly suggested that the preliminary rites at 504–521 are followed up by the malediction against Aeneas and the Romans at 607–629, and are sealed with Dido's suicide, the *devotio*-like[302] sacrifice needed to grant full validity to the malediction itself. In other words, that the entire final part of the book is a carefully structured sequence where magic rites play a crucial part[303]. Seen in this light, Dido's suicide

300 Goud, Yardley 1988. Cf. also Bowie 1998: 73.

301 An over-the-top appeal in Vivona 1898: 428. On the compositional issues in Book 4 cf. Sabbadini 1910–20: 2.ix-xi; Setaioli 1970.

302 Tupet 1976: 262.

303 Tupet 1976: 256–259.

would stand as the ultimately violent gesture against Aeneas (a fully tragic, rather than pathetic gesture)[304], the final unleashing of the queen's revenge. The temporal disjunction Virgil introduces between **[213]** the 'preliminary rites' at 504–521 and their completion at the end of the book further necessitates Mercury's intervention to hasten Aeneas' departure at 560–570. If the funeral pyre with his effigy were to be set alight while he is still in Carthage, the rite would immediately display its destructive impact on its intended target[305]. Once Aeneas is out of direct reach, Dido's aggression will metamorphose into a universal curse across space and time.

12. *Heroides* 7 has played a foundational role in the interpretation of several aspects of Virgil's narrative in Book 4[306] – lines 178–180, in particular, have been regarded as an authoritative exegesis of Dido's request for *tempus inane* at 4.435–436[307]. There is undoubtedly a significant 'collaborative effect'[308] in Ovid's attitude to his model, whose potential meanings he activates and magnifies while proceeding to distance and differentiate his own take on the story. But we should never forget that at the very same time Ovid is 'waging war against Vergil'[309]: he is engaged, that is, in a systematic rewriting of Virgil's account which programmatically distances itself from its archetype and develops its own ideological agenda. His Dido is, but also emphatically isn't, a *Doppelgänger* of Virgil's heroine[310].

The discrepancy between the two poets' attitudes can be discerned in the overall structure of their narratives. Whereas, in the *Aeneid*, Dido's trusting her message to Anna opens up a complex space in

304 Tragic parallels, Ajax above all, are discussed by Delcourt 1939.

305 Delcourt 1939: 170–1.

306 Among early commentators see Heyne on 433 and, more recently, Austin on 436, who rules out any reference to suicide at 4.436 on the basis of *Her*. 7.177–179. Vivona 1898: 431 goes as far as taking *Her*. 7.181 as a paraphrase of the 'original' text of *Aen*. 4.436, and conjectures accordingly (see above nn. 10, 42). Other instances are discussed in the text.

307 'O[vid] interprets a Virgilian ambiguity' (Knox on 178).

308 Thomas 2001: 80.

309 Jacobson 1974: 90.

310 On Ovid's recasting of Virgil's Dido see now Miller 2004, with Jacobson 1974: 76–93, esp.77–84 (analyses the main differences between the two texts, but has very little time for Ovid's); Kauffman 1986: 48–49; Knox 1995: 201–202; Thomas 2001: 78–83, 154–159, 214–215; Casali 2004-05; Armstrong 2005: 110–114.

which different layers of meaning are elaborated for, and decoded by, **[214]** different characters, Ovid's heroine writes directly to Aeneas, and therefore changes her strategy of communication. Also, Ovid focuses on a very specific aspect of Dido's story, her request to Aeneas for a delayed departure, for more time to spend together: this is the essence of her message, reiterated twice, at 39–44 and 169–180. This request, which in the *Aeneid* is but one part of a complicated series of exchanges between the two main characters, effectively spans the entire letter. As a consequence, Dido's entreaties to Aeneas at 4.413–414 or the frantic exchanges crisply summarised in *fertque refertque soror* (4.438) have been identified as specific starting points for Ovid's letter[311]. In practice, however, the letter carves out for itself a time-span which doesn't neatly dovetail with its model, but rather rearranges in a different perspective large swathes of Virgil's narrative[312]: Dido is offering Aeneas a last chance to reconsider his departure (as indeed Virgil's Dido does at 416–436), but, for instance, the outburst at lines 37–40 harks back to Dido's invective at 4.365–367; the obsessive presence of Aeneas in Dido's thoughts (25–26) echoes 4.83; the ominously phrased 'epitaph' at 119–120 quotes 4.655, yet leaves room for an impassioned appeal at 169–180; suicide is explicitly mentioned as an option from the very beginning, and the *ensis* is at the ready, yet we are still far away from Virgil's dénouement: Dido's threats to kill herself are intended to sway Aeneas' mind, and if he turns out to be *mutabilis* there will be no need for such a tragic outcome. Ovid works, that is, by alternately compressing and expanding Virgil's narrative, thus disrupting its chronological and psychological sequences and offering a markedly different characterisation of Dido. Her long letter to Aeneas is in many ways a monographic expansion of the request for *tempus inane* which in the *Aeneid* occupies only a distinct, if important, moment in the overall economy of Book 4. Dido writes in order to persuade Aeneas to remain at Carthage, at least for the winter, at best forever, and indeed the whole letter displays far more articulate attempts at persuasion than any other one of the *Heroides*: this time (or so we are led to believe) the writer has a real chance at changing **[215]** the course of events[313]. Her

311 Respectively by Palmer *ad loc*. and A. Barchiesi 1987: 85-86.
312 Spentzou 2003: 174–195 at 177 (a clever reading of *Her*. 7).
313 Jacobson 1974: 84. *Pace* Knox 1995: 202, Dido is far from 'resigned' to Aeneas' departure.

protestations to the contrary must be regarded as part of a rhetorical strategy of dissimulation which aims at lowering Aeneas' resistance by suggesting that he need not choose right then and there, once and for all, between Carthage and Rome, between *Roma* and *amor*. If readers already know what Aeneas' reply will be, Dido does not. Lines 4.416–436 represent the *terminus ante quem* for her letter: Aeneas' negative reply at 437–449 has not yet reached Dido, and *Her*. 7.51–52 – *tu quoque cum ventis utinam mutabilis esses! / et, nisi duritia robora vincis, eris* 'O that you too were changeable with the winds! – and, unless in hardness you exceed the oak, you will be so' – endow with tragic irony the Virgilian simile of the oak at 4.441–446 (and in the process neatly turn Mercury's words at 4.569 against Aeneas)[314].

Ovidian Dido's strategy of persuasion rests largely on editing out the threatening overtones which we have been tracing in Dido's message to Aeneas. As he does so, Ovid powerfully orients an interpretation of Virgil's Dido as a character who earns the readers' sympathy precisely because she is not dominated by rage[315]. Ovid's rewriting of *Aen*. 4.433–436 is especially telling: *tempora parva peto, / dum freta mitescunt et amor, dum tempore et usu / fortiter edisco tristia posse pati* 'I ask for a little time – while the sea and my love grow calm, while through time and wont I learn the strength to endure my sorrows bravely' (178–80) either resolves or annuls the potential ambiguities inscribed in the model. Gone is the elusive *inane*, gone the mention of *furor*, while *dum ... fortiter edisco ... pati* maps a precise agenda and a time-line rooted in the rhythms of the natural world. The image of *spatium requiemque furori* (*Aen*. 4.433) is picked up earlier on in *da breve saevitiae spatium pelagique tuaeque* 'Grant a short space for the cruelty of the sea, and for your own, to subside' (73), but here, of course, Dido is talking of Aeneas, not of herself.

The transition from Virgil's *doceat fortuna dolere* to Ovid's neat take on Aeschylus' τῷ πάθει μάθος (*Ag*. 177) is particularly significant. *Edisco pati* is unambiguous, while the indeterminacy of the absolute *dolere* paves the way to amphibology. The use of *dolere* in the sense of 'irasci, **[216]**

314 For a similar strategy see *Her*. 5.109, 6.109.

315 Contrast Dryden's strategy: '[H]is Dido is a powerful figure, particularly in her rage, a rage which underscores the threat to Aeneas; as a result, however, she loses much of the Virgilian sympathy that has appealed to readers since Ovid' (Thomas 2001: 159).

indignari, aegre ferre'[316], and indeed of *dolor* as 'ira, livor'[317], are well attested, notably in erotic contexts. Consider for instance Hermione's outburst in Ov. *Her*. 8.57–58: *rumpor et ora mihi pariter cum mente tumescunt*, / *pectoraque inclusis ignibus usta dolent* 'I burst with anger, and my face swells with passion no less than my heart, and my breast burns with the pains of pent-up wrath', but especially *Tr*. 2.387–388, a transparent reference to Medea herself: *tingeret ut ferrum natorum sanguine mater*, / *concitus a laeso fecit amore dolor*[318] 'The mother who stained her sword with the blood of her children was roused to the deed by the anger of slighted love', where *dolor* emerges as the driving force of the woman's actions[319]. Unfortunate events such as Aeneas' betrayal can 'teach' various things – how to 'suffer', indeed, but also how to 'be angry', and exploit the pain in order to take revenge. The latter is unequivocally the option of Seneca's Medea, who, starting in her programmatic prologue, raises *dolor* (almost *Dolor*) to the guiding force of her actions: *gravior exurgat dolor* 'My bitterness must grow more weighty' (49)[320]. Her 'anguish' is personified and addressed (139–140 *melius*, *a melius*, *dolor* / *furiose*, *loquere* 'No, speak more kindly, raging pain' and again at 914, 944, 1016, 1019) as the catalyst for revenge, almost as a divine entity, to which sacrifices are offered: *plura non habui*, *dolor*, / *quae tibi litarem* 'I had no more to

316 *ThLL* V.1.1823 71ss. Cf. Prop. 2.28.9.

317 Pichon 1902: 133, cf. *OLD s. v.* 3. Cf. Ov. *Ars* 2.490 *illa* [sc. *medicamina*] *feri requiem sola doloris habent*; *Her*. 6.139–40 *Lemniadum facinus culpo*, *non miror*, *Iason* / *quamlibet ignavis iste dat arma dolor*.

318 The line harks back to *Ecl*. 8.47 (above, n. 47), but also to *Aen*. 5.5, with *amore dolores* at verse-ending, in reference to Dido. The evocative juxtaposition of the isosyllabic *amor* and *dolor* at the end of the line, underscored by homoioteleuton, may well be a Virgilian innovation, promptly echoed by Propertius (2.8.36 *saevit amore dolor* [cf. *Aen*. 4.532 *saevit amor*]; 3.20.27 *amore dolores*) and seized upon with enthusiasm by Ovid (*amore dolor* also at *Ars* 1.736, *ex Pont*. 7.40; *amore dolores Ars* 2.519; *amore dolet Her*. 5.102). Prop. 3.20 is particularly noteworthy because it offers a reversal of sorts of the Dido-Aeneas story (an unfaithful lover is abandoning (probably) Cynthia to seek his fortune in Africa), and may be yet another indication of Propertius' early acquaintance with the *Aeneid* (Book 3 may be dated to 25–22; and *arma* at the opening of 3.4 clearly points to *Aen*. 1.1: Nethercut 1970: 394, with Fedeli *ad loc*.). 3.20.2 *vidisti a lecto quem dare vela tuo?* describes the same situation found at *Aen*. 4.409–410 (for *dare vela* cf. *Aen*. 4.546); and a faint echo of *Aen*. 1.33 *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem* may be traced in 3.4.5 *tantine*, *ut lacrimes*, *Africa tota fuit?*

319 Cf. the *iunctura laesus amor* in *Her*. 7.59, and the *Epistula Didonis* (above, n. 211) 7, where lines 10–17 develop at length the interdependence between *amor* and *dolor*. Note, incidentally, the use of *concitare*, on which see above n. 117.

320 For a similar train of thought cf. *Med*. 907–908 (*prolusit dolor* / *per ista noster*). Hine *ad* 49 has a very good (and very Anglo-Saxon) note on *dolor* and its role in the play.

offer you, my pain, in atonement' (1019–1020). Both Jason (446 *fert odia prae se*: *totus in vultu est dolor* 'she shows her hatred; all her resentment is in her face') and the Nurse (671–672) **[217]** recognize that Medea's *dolor* is an embodiment of her hatred and a force pushing her towards a *maius ... monstrum* (674–675). Virgil will come very close to suggesting a similar connection at the beginning of Book 5, once Dido's *dolor* has come to complete fruition. The Trojans see flames in the distance: *quae tantum accenderit ignem / causa latet*; *duri magno sed amore dolores / polluto*, *notumque furens quid femina possit*, / *triste per augurium Teucrorum pectora ducunt* 'What cause kindled so great a flame is unknown; but the cruel pangs when deep love is profaned, and knowledge of what a woman can do in frenzy, lead the hearts of the Trojans amid sad forebodings' (5.4–7)[321]. In Ovid's letter Dido significantly addresses herself to *laese pudor*, not *dolor*.

Or look at the way Ovid reworks Dido's disclaimer, at 4.425–427, that she is not one of his Greek enemies[322]. *Her*. 7.161–168 turns *non ego ... / iuravi* into *non ego sum Phthias magnisve oriunda Mycenis*, / *nec steterunt in te virque paterque meus* 'I am not of Phthia, nor sprung of great Mycenae, nor have I had a husband and a father who have stood against you' (165–166). In the *Aeneid* Dido is at pains to deny that she has actively done anything against Aeneas, thus implying, as I have argued above, that she may yet do so; in Ovid Dido does not mention the possibility that she may have acted against Aeneas even in order to deny it, but displaces the possibility, and the denial, onto her relations. Again, threatening messages, even indirect ones, are carefully distanced from the character of Dido even before they are negated. In the *Aeneid* Dido (unexpectedly) denies that she has upset Anchises' grave – here she wishes that his bones may rest in peace: *et senis Anchisae molliter ossa cubent!* (7.162)[323]. Since these systematic inversions refer to an ever-present, overpowering model, they are liable to be read more as *Verneinungen* than reliable

321 'We get the unnerving impressions that Dido's Curse has already begun its work' (Khan 1996: 11). Miller 1995 offers a sharp analysis of the connection between fire and women in the poem.

322 See above p. 206–7/91.

323 Casali 2004-05: 158–164 connects *Her*. 7.162 with *Aen*. 4.427. He argues that Ovidian Dido's inversion of the curse uttered at *Aen*. 4.615-629 into a blessing confirms the intimation that *cumulatam morte remittam* (*Aen*. 4.436) implies Dido's willingness to retract her curse and turn it into a blessing (see above n. 51).

changes of attitude. Virgil's Dido hid her threats behind veiled allusions to Euripides' Medea; her Ovidian double reveals that she has identified those threats precisely because she is so at pains to overturn or displace each and every one of them.

Ovid's 'normalising' reading of Dido's most controversial utterances in the *Aeneid* can hardly be casual. His mission is to launch a **[218]** sustained attack on Aeneas and his justifications: an elegiac soliloquy is the best medium to convey a one-sided attack on a deserting lover. Implicit threats are edited out of Ovid's reworking of *Aen*. 4.416–436, and displaced onto a different section of the letter, but with a very different function. Key to understanding the complexity of the letter is Dido's use of negations. We are told early on, as an opening gambit, that her intention is not to convince Aeneas to stay, which is of course the opposite of the truth: *nec quia te nostra sperem prece posse moveri* 'not because I hope you may be moved by prayer of mine' (3) warns early on that negatives, here, should be taken with a pinch of salt[324]. An excess of protestation is also apparent at line 29, where Dido offers the rather unexpected remark that *non tamen Aenean*, *quamvis male cogitat*, *odi* 'yet, however ill his thought of me, I hate him not'. This may as well be the case, but the long narrative section that follows (35–74) veers ominously between aggressive daydreaming and explicit threats, as the imagined tempest[325] becomes the physical embodiment of Dido's emotions: Aeneas is perhaps not alone in nurturing (if he does) *pretiosa odia* 'a dear-bought hate' (47)[326]. Dido herself is aware of the dangers inherent in her thinking: *perdita ne perdam*, *timeo*, *noceamve nocenti*, / *neu bibat aequoreas naufragus hostis aquas* 'Undone myself, I fear lest I be the undoing of him who is my undoing, lest I bring harm to him who brings harm to me, lest my enemy be wrecked at sea and drink the waters of the deep' (61–62: note that *bibat* reifies Virgil's *supplicia hausurum scopulis* at *Aen*. 4.383) is followed by an obsessive elaboration of what Aeneas would have to

324 Knox on 1-6 assumes that '[t]his letter begins with a declaration that is not meant to persuade its putative recipient' because of 'the setting of this moment in the text of the *Aeneid*' – Aeneas is already in the harbour preparing to leave. Both in Virgil and in Ovid this setting is precisely what gives Dido's final request a tragic sense of urgency, but does nothing to erase the hope that he could still yield to her entreaties.

325 On the importance of aquatic imagery in Book 4, and their function, inter alia, in establishing the homology between Dido and Juno, see above p. 201–2/86.

326 Knox on 47.

think in the middle of a storm. The emphatic disclaimer at line 65 – *nullum sit in omine pondus* 'may there be nothing in the omen!' – cannot even begin to tame the intrinsic violence of her fantasy.

The difference between these threats and those lurking in Dido's words in *Aeneid* 4.416–436, however, is decisive. Ovid's Dido can expatiate on the violent sufferings which Aeneas may face because they are all presented as the consequences of a decision he can still retract: he can still (just) come back, and avoid a shipwreck. Nothing in Ovid's **[219]** text suggests that Dido's violent feelings would persist if Aeneas returns to her, because she still clings to the hope of a long-term relationship. This is why the painful death she conjures up for Aeneas is more graphic, but less dangerous: if he comes back he can be spared. Note the interesting rephrasing of *Aen*. 4.431 – *nec iam coniugium antiquum*, *quod prodidit*, *oro* 'No more do I plead for the old marriage tie which he forswore' – at 7.167–168: *si pudet uxoris*, *non nupta*, *sed hospita dicar*; / *dum tua sit Dido*, *quidlibet esse feret* 'If you shame to have me your wife, let me not be called bride, but hostess; so she be yours, Dido will endure to be what you will'. Dido's request now goes beyond the more or less sincere relinquishing of her old hopes for a proper position as *uxor*, and the mere request for time: she explicitly offers herself to Aeneas as *tua*, whatever the underlying definition. In Virgil the sequence of thoughts is more compressed – and less reassuring: if Aeneas comes back, he will receive an unspecified reward, but it is far from clear whether the suffering he has caused Dido can neatly be undone and forgiven. In the tragic setting of the *Aeneid* there appears to remain no residual hope that mistakes can be rectified.

Yet, even as Ovid turns his Dido into a frank character who clearly outlines to Aeneas the available options and sees rage and violence only as a last resort, the text allows us to see that certain aspects of Virgil's secretly ambivalent and dangerous character are not lost on him. Lines 23–24 are a case in point: *uror ut inducto ceratae sulpure taedae*, / *ut pia fumosis addita tura focis* 'I am all ablaze with love, like torches of wax tipped with sulphur, like pious incense placed on smoking altar-fires' exploit the metaphorical association of love with fire, but the simile introduces an open-ended funereal overtone. Dido is thinking here of her own 'funeral-as-wedding', yet the memory of *Aen*. 4.604–605 (*faces in castra tulissem*, / *implessemque foros flammis* 'I should have carried fire

into his camp, filled his decks with flame') prevents the exclusion of a more aggressive *arrière-pensée*, just as in the case of Virgil's pregnant *morte* at 4.436. More significantly, Ovid pictures the storm threatening Aeneas as a projection of Dido's rage, almost the embodiment of her feelings: the elaborate but implicit association between Dido's emotions and the dangers of natural elements (water first of all) which we noticed in the *Aeneid* are now made explicit with gnomic clarity: *nec violasse fidem temptantibus aequora prodest*; / *perfidiae poenas exigit ille locus* 'Nor is it well for those who have broken faith to tempt the billows. Yon is the place that exacts the penalty for faithlessness' (57–58)[327]. And of course we **[220]** have already seen how Ovid's rewriting of Dido's 'pregnancy' actively engages with the threatening undertones of her attitude *vis à vis* the child she never had with Aeneas and Ascanius himself.

Ovid's 'gentler'[328] Dido cannot invalidate the suspicion that Virgil's heroine harbours violent thoughts even as she appears to be resigned to her fate. On the contrary, I would argue, firstly, that his elegiac reinterpretation[329] of the *Aeneid* testifies to Ovid's awareness of those thoughts precisely because they are systematically erased or displaced; and, secondly, that his Dido affects a 'literal relationship to language and meaning'[330] precisely because verbal ambiguity is Virgil's main strategy in articulating Dido's emotional complexity, and therefore, in Ovid's eyes, 'complexity is just a way of excusing Aeneas'[331]. As literalness attempts to erase verbal dexterity and ambiguity, enough traces of Dido's old expressive habits remain to show the constructedness of Ovid's strategy, which is as subjective and partial as that of his predecessor. I doubt, therefore, whether Ovid's Dido could safely be used as a character witness in the attempt to read *Aeneid* 4 as a fight between Dido's 'humble renunciation'[332] and Aeneas' unrelieved callousness. Ovid is always a partial and interested – in a word: polemical – reader of Virgil, who consistently 'draws attention to troubled or ambiguous aspects' of

327 A traditional concept, see Knox *ad loc*. Cf. the whole sequence 51-60; at 59 *praecipue cum laesus Amor*, *quia mater Amorum* ... there may be a faint (if intriguing) echo of *Ecl*. 8.47–8 *saevus Amor docuit natorum sanguine matrem* / *commaculare manus*.

328 Jacobson 1974: 85.

329 Desmond 1993.

330 Desmond 1993: 65.

331 Tarrant 2002: 25.

332 Heinze 1915: 103.

the *Aeneid*, in order to 'brin[g] out what was already there in Virgil'[333]. Crucially, he does so not only when, to take a well-known instance, he reinterprets Aeneas's apologetic *longe servet vestigia coniunx* 'let my wife follow our steps at a distance' (2.711) as an outright desertion (*Her*. 7.83–84 *si quaeras ubi sit formosi mater Iuli / occidit a duro sola relicta viro* 'Do you ask where the mother of pretty Iulus is?—she perished, left behind by her unfeeling lord!')[334], but also when he retrospectively validates the threatening 'further voices' which he detects lurking in Virgil's Dido[335].

[221] Ambiguous denials convey, in Ovid, Dido's enduring hopes. She insists on the temporary nature of the delay she is proposing to Aeneas – she will herself point out when the time to leave for good has come (173) – and, really, would not want him to stay in Carthage forever even if he wanted to: *nec te*, *si cupies*, *ipsa manere sinam* 'and I myself, though you desire it, will not let you to stay' (174). This last statement, rather than indicating Dido's 'deteriorating state of mind'[336], shows that her denials and protestations must all along be interpreted as a projection of her desires, and as part of a soothing rhetoric of persuasion. In this letter the interplay between denial and desire is so intense that it may even have deceived scribes. Dido's request for a delay at 178–180 is introduced with the words: *pro meritis et siqua tibi debebimus ultra*, / *pro spe coniugii tempora parva peto* .... 'by your past kindnesses, and by that other debt I still, perhaps, shall owe you, by my hope of wedlock, I ask for a little time' (177–178), and there is no doubt that *spes coniugii* is precisely what ultimately motivates Dido, just as in Virgil non *iam coniugium antiquum ... oro* (431) barely conceals a very different desire. But Dido can scarcely admit to it so directly in these circumstances, and the emendation of *pro spe coniugii* into the superficially reassuring (for Aeneas) *non spe coniugii* is therefore intriguing[337].

333 Thomas 2001: 79 and 80.

334 Knox 1995: 216; Thomas 2001: 78–79.

335 The assertion that 'the so-called 'pessimistic' reading of the *Aeneid*, current in so much modern criticism of Virgil, began with O[vid]. It forms the basis for his portrayal of Dido in this epistle' (Knox 1995: 202) is thus at best partial.

336 Knox on 174.

337 Hall 1990: 275, followed by Knox, *contra* Rosati 1999: 407. If correct, *pro spe coniugii* would have to be taken in reference to the past: 'the hope of marriage which I once nurtured.'

13. *Totus hic liber translatus est de tertio Apollonii*, Servius avers[338]: yet, of course, a number of shared features between *Aeneid* 4 and Euripides' *Medea* have long been recognized. As a whole, however, attention has focussed more on similar expressions than on a systematic comparison between the actions of the play and the epic. The likely reason, I suggested, may well have been that a comparison between Dido and Apollonius' alleged 'loving maiden' – for all of the latter's frightening aspects – must have appeared more natural and reassuring than an association with the fiercest archetype of female revenge in Western literature. It is one thing to allow Dido a Medea-like wild emotional outburst immediately after she envisages Aeneas' impending betrayal (especially as she quickly metamorphoses into a moving *sup-* **[222]** *plex*), or even a long-term curse which will display its painful effects only in centuries to come; it is another thing altogether to trace in the second part of Book 4 unspoken and unconscious feelings of revenge which, but for their immediate departure from Carthage, could place Aeneas and Ascanius in the same position as Jason and his children (or Tereus and Itys). Medean undertones irrevocably complicate the picture of a forlorn and resigned woman.

More space for Euripides' Medea among Dido's intertextual ancestors is surely needed. But there are in fact more than two texts at stake: if Dido's (literary) family-tree is to be investigated thoroughly in search of connections with Medea, both ascendants and descendants must be included. As we have seen, it is important both to analyze the Medeas who offer Dido a model – Euripides'[339], Apollonius'[340], Ennius'[341] – and those who recognize Dido as a model, Seneca's[342], but especially

338 *Ad Aen*. 4.1. An equally forthright opinion in Macr. 5.17.4.

339 Collard 1975; Arcellaschi 1990: 418–22; Martina 1984-91, with a convenient list of significant intertextual links with *Medea* and other Euripidean plays, for instance *Bacchae*. Cf. also Heinze 1915: 113–117, and Pease 1935: 13, with references to earlier bibliography. Earlier studies such as De Witt 1907 and Abel 1957–58 have little to offer. I have not been able to see Fenik 1960.

340 R. M. Henry 1930; Hügi 1952: 79–99; Collard 1975 and now the excellent treatment by Nelis 2001: 125–185.

341 Wigodsky 1972: 76, 93; Stabryla 1970: 86–91.

342 See above for allusions to *Aen*. 4 at *Med*. 285–296. Seneca activates the memory of Dido already in the initial monologue which opens his Medea: *nunc, nunc adeste sceleris ultrices deae, / … / adeste, thalamis horridae quondam meis / quales stetistis* (13–17) intersects the ominous presence of the Nymphs at Dido's wedding with the repeated reference to *Dirae ultrices* at 4.473 and 610. Dido's 'Bacchic' features

Ovid's (nor should Hosidius Geta and Dracontius[343] be ignored). The heuristic value of this retroactive form of intertextuality will be no less noteworthy, for it may well show that such exceptional readers of Virgil were disposed to acknowledge the similarities between the two characters.

[223] At least since La Cerda scholars have pointed out several instances where Virgil's Book 4 comes close to Euripides' *Medea*. Dido herself signals the importance of the model in the *sphragis*-like statement at 4.657–658 (*felix*, *heu nimium felix*, *si litora tantum* / *numquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae* 'happy, too happy, had but the Dardan keels never touched our shores!'), which harks back to the opening lines of *Medea* via Ennius (208–216 J. = 205–213 R.[2]) and Catullus 64.171–172: *Iuppiter omnipotens*, *utinam ne tempore primo* / *Cnosia Cecropiae tetigissent litora puppes*[344] 'Almighty Jupiter, I would the Attic ships had never touched Cnosian shores'. Virgil synthesizes the original(s) by focussing exclusively on the very fact which has ultimately caused Dido's misfortune, and places it at the end of the story, where her counterfactual wish is all the more poignant, and final (poignancy is reinforced as readers may note the contrast *vis à vis* 4.45–46: *dis equidem auspicibus reor et Iunone secunda* / *hunc cursum Iliacas vento tenuisse carinas* 'I certainly believe that it was with the gods' favour and Juno's aid that the Ilian ships held their course hither with the wind'). Equally important, if less direct, is the connection with the Euripidean section of Medea's story established at 4.429–430. The passive-aggressive *extremum … munus* Dido promises to Aeneas cannot fail to recall Damon's words at *Ecl*. 8.60, which are preceded by a denunciation of *saevus Amor* (Ennius again), the very *Amor* who *docuit natorum sanguine matrem* / *commaculare*

may also be responsible for the accretion of similar characteristics onto Ovid's and Seneca's Medeas – which in this respect differ from Euripides': cf. Ov. *Med*. fr. II with Sen. *Med*. 123.

343 The plot of Dracontius' 'epic' *Medea* is heavily indebted to both Books 1 and 4, and several important allusions refer to key passages of Virgil's text, see for instance the description of Jason as Aeneas at 257–260, which also echoes (contrastively) Dido's 'wedding' in the cave (257 *proprium vocat ipse maritum*). The significance of these and other allusions is much downplayed by Kaufman 2006 (275 n. 1012 is characteristic), not surprisingly, perhaps, in view of her dismissive take on the nature of Dracontius' intertextuality (45-47).

344 Heinze 1915: 117 n. 42; cf. Bessone 1997: 70-73. Wigodsky 1972: 76 and 128 believes that Virgil's primary model is Catullus, rather than Euripides or Ennius.

manus; *crudelis tu quoque mater* 'taught a mother to stain her hands in her children's blood; cruel, too, were you, O mother.' (47–48)[345]. The repetition of *improbus* in reference to *Amor* at 49 and 50 establishes a further link with *Aeneid* 4. Such emphatic connections retrospectively alert us to the fact that verbal parallels, which are especially numerous in Dido's onslaught against Aeneas at 305–330, should not detract attention from larger thematic connections. These connections shed much light on Dido's personality overall, and warn against privileging her connection with Apollonius' Medea above all others.

Both Dido and Euripides' Medea are exiled queens betrayed in their affections by foreign suitors they have helped and still love. Both display a powerful personality – early in the play Medea is defined ἄγριος and αὐθάδης (103–104), Dido possesses *animi* (4.414) – which **[224]** makes them acutely aware of their status and preoccupied about how other characters would react to their demise.

Medea is a consistently deceitful character: she deceives Creon and Jason, of course, the latter in a most elaborate *Trugrede*; but she can also deceive friends in the pursuit of her objectives, as she does with Aegeus. In Book 4, it is Aeneas who is usually portrayed as a scheming dissimulator, while Dido's lack of honesty with Anna attracts praise, not criticism, as a gesture which shields Anna from a horrifying truth. The connection we have established between Medea's deceitful request to Creon and Dido's message to Aeneas, however, goes to show that Medea's pervasive deceitfulness has influenced Dido more than is normally assumed. Medea's dissimulation leads to a violent revenge which claims four dead within the boundaries of the play. In so far as Dido does not succeed in getting the short time she begs for, and her magic incantations fail, this epic reincarnation of Medea appears to be floundering: but by turning Medea's accomplished revenge into a counterfactual desire, a veiled menace, or an explicit but delayed curse, Dido displaces rather than suppresses the violence of the model.

A number of significant textual echoes connects Ovid's Medeas

345 Ov. *Her*. 12.33 echoes *Ecl*. 8.41 in the context of an elaborate intertextual strategy which connects his Medea to her famous poetic ancestors: see Hinds 1993: 21–27. Coleman on *Ecl*. 8.48 doubts the identification of Virgil's *mater* with Medea. Cf. Sen. *Med*. 136 *saevit infelix amor*.

with Dido[346]. From the very first word (*at*) *Heroides* 12[347] advertises a connection with Book 4[348]. Virgil's pithy definition of Dido as *saucia cura* (4.1) combines with *male sana* at 4.8 to inspire *male saucia* at *Her*. 12.57, thus remotivating in the process the allusion to Ennius's *Medea* (216 Jocelyn: *amore saevo saucia*)[349]. A host of intertexts ensures that Dido's plight is never too far from the reader's mind[350]. So, for instance, Medea's reproach to Jason for disregarding her *meritum* picks up a Virgilian suggestion (*Her*. 12.22 with *Aen*. 4.317)[351]; her identifi- **[225]** cation of the first decisive step to self-destruction (32 *illa fuit mentis prima ruina meae* 'that was the first impulse to the downfall of my soul' echoes *Aen*. 4.169–170 *ille dies primus leti primusque malorum / causa fuit* 'That day the first of death, the first of calamity was cause'); the two sleepless and tormented nights, one as Love takes hold, the other as separation looms inevitable (57–58 and 169–70 with *Aen*. 4.1–5, 80–83, 522–32); the invocation to Sol and a parallel list of deities (79–80, *Aen*. 4.607–9)[352]. Jason's and Aeneas' *crimen* against their lovers comes to light in a similar gradual fashion (137–158 and *Aen*. 4.586–607), and Medea, like Dido, first experiences dark forebodings (147–48, *Aen*. 4.296–98, 305), then gives free rein to gestures of desperation (155–59, *Aen*. 4.589–90). Even Medea's unconvincing show of humility (184 *nunc animis audi verba minora meis* 'listen now to my words – words too humble for my proud soul!') is shot through with the similarly complex attitude displayed by Dido at 4.413–15. Significant intertexts, too, connect Ovid's representation of Medea in *Metamorphoses* 7 to Virgil's Dido[353]: especially striking are the links Ovid

346 On the 'redistribution' of language associated with Dido in various parts of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* see Tarrant 2002: 26. Cf. also Hinds 1993, esp. 45-46, and Smith 1997: 100–104.

347 Knox 1986 argues against the authenticity of this letter, which is convincingly reasserted by Hinds 1993.

348 Jacobson 1974: 114 n. 13.

349 An echo of the first part of Ennius' line (*Medea animo aegro*) may perhaps be heard in Dido's definition as *aegram / … amantem* as early as *Aen*. 1.351-352.

350 See Pease and Bessone *ad loc*.

351 Cf. also 192 with *Aen*. 4.317.

352 Cf. the reference to *conscia Iuno* at *Her*. 12.87 and *Aen*. 4.608 (with the possible allusion to the rites of Juno Lucina mentioned by DServius on 4.518). In Ovid, Jason invokes the goddess as witness of his promise (*conscia sit Iuno sacris praefecta maritis*), but Dido's malediction deprives his words of their intended positive force.

353 Cf. Ov. *Met*. 7.47 *quid tuta times* with *Aen*. 4.298 *omnia tuta timens*, and *Met*. 7.69–70 *coniugiumque putas speciosaque nomina culpae / inponis, Medea, tuae?* with *Aen*. 4.172 *coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam*.

establishes between Medea's and Dido's magic practices[354].

We are now in a position better to assess Ovid's overall strategy *vis à vis* Virgil's Dido. As we have seen, his *Heroides* 7 systematically elides the menacing aspects – both spoken and unspoken – of Book 4. His Dido has no time for magical practices, historical curses, covert threats. Rather, she is still bent on getting Aeneas back, and even her threats are deployed in the service of her goal. Her candid and disillusioned assessment of Aeneas' behaviour towards her and towards Creusa does not diminish her interest. Naturally, such a careful **[226]** orchestration lends itself to be read as a large-scale indictment of Aeneas' – and the *Aeneid*'s – value system, where a wife can be simply 'left behind' without even the consolatory apparatus of visions, delusions, and divine orders which frame Creusa's disappearance in *Aeneid* 2. But this is only one half of Ovid's reading of Book 4. The second half comes a few letters later, in *Heroides* 12. Since Medea's and Dido's stories overlap only in part, and crucially diverge in their dénouement, Ovid's sustained juxtaposing of the two characters in Medea's epistle is not predetermined, nor should it be explained away as the inevitable consequence of Dido's towering role as a literary heroine: it must be seen, on the contrary, as a strategic choice which integrates and modifies the unilateral reading of Dido's episode offered in *Heroides* 7. Here we find, safely displaced, but recognisable nonetheless, traces of the repressed violence which dominates Dido even at her most 'self-humiliating'. A constellation of verbal echoes shapes the reader's perception of Medea as *altera Dido*, and retrospectively validates the archetypal role of Medea in the construction of Virgil's most famous character.

14. Medea's larger role in shaping Virgil's Dido entails interesting consequences, both local and general[355]. In terms of narrative structure,

354 Scarcia 1991. *Met*. 7.183 *nuda pedem* harks back to *Aen*. 4.518 *unum exuta pedem vinclis*, part of a systematic re-elaboration of the magic scene which in *Ecl*. 8.64–109 follows the reference to Medea at lines 47–48; *Aen*. 4.513 *falcibus … aënis* may stand behind *curvamine falcis aeneae* at Ov. *Met*. 7.227. Hosidius Geta (326), too, will refer 4.518 to Medea, but cf. already Sen. *Med*. 753 *secreta nudo nemora lustravi pede*. On Hosidius' cunning exploitation of the Medea-Dido connection in his *Medea* see now McGill 2005: 46–51, who is inclined to regard many of the cento's allusions to *Aeneid* 4 as contrastive, and Hardie 2007.

355 And should be assessed – *mutatis mutandis* – in the spirit rightly advocated by Horsfall 1995: 127–128: 'enriched understanding of the texture of allusion out of

allusions to Medea add a significant layer of violence, irony and deception, although we should not forget that Dido is less successful than Euripides' Medea, partly because of the different rules of engagement which govern an epic as opposed to a tragic text: after all she doesn't persuade (or trick) Aeneas into granting her 'more time', and her revenge will only be delayed and indirect. Also, sharper awareness of the Euripidean intertext makes Aeneas' reaction to Dido's final plea, Mercury's intervention, and the protagonist's flight from Troy more deeply and effectively determined: the tragic plotting of Book 4 is therefore strengthened. At a thematic level, the Medea intertexts **[227]** add to the complexity of Dido's character by fleshing out the other side of her personality: she is loving, generous, constructive, but can also be violent and vindictive when hurt in her dearest affections[356]. The traces of Medea's personality which resurface in Dido's words are diffracted, but not diluted in their emotional impact, just as Dido's aggressive stance at 381–387 is not erased by her subsequent pleas, but simply displaced onto future generations – the 'heaps of corpses' hinted at in *cumulata(m) morte* are both those of the Trojans en route to Italy and those of many Romans to come. Crucially, however, we should see the interaction between different 'further voices', and, here, between different aspects of Dido's personality, as a dynamic process. Much as the shared metaphors of critical jargon implicitly assume a two-dimensional view of the text, and going 'further' has often come to be regarded as synonymous with going 'beyond appearances'[357], strategies of 'subversion' should actually be seen to interact dynamically within the text, and to yield a multiplicity of meanings rather than one deeper truth lurking beneath a deceptive surface[358]. There are indeed several discordant voices in the *Aeneid*: not even all the less immediately evident ones are consistent in their tendencies. Just as Dido's immense

which Dido's disintegration and death is created serves not to exculpate her (or to inculpate Aeneas), but to deepen the grief aroused by her end.'

356 On such structural complexity in Virgil's construction of the feminine see esp. Miller 1989.

357 The title of this paper, an instance of laudatory *aemulatio*, should not be seen to endorse the spatial implications of a literal interpretation of the superlative.

358 Schiesaro 1993: 265. Cf., too, the important remarks by D. P. Fowler 1997: 25–26 = 2000: 126–127 (in part quoted here as an epigraph), esp. 25 = 128: 'To say that this text is relevant but not this text is not to discover the literary system but to construct it, and those constructions are part of wider constructions of antiquity'.

suffering subverts the comfortable 'Jovian' reading of Aeneas' departure as inevitably destined *ad maiorem gloriam*, Dido's covert aggressiveness, in turn, destabilises an over-romanticised reading of her character as a forlorn elegiac heroine, the entirely passive victim of an emotionally challenged cad. The subversive impact of intertextuality[359] need not be restricted to a single shifting of meaning from the presumedly uniform deceptiveness of the poem's 'public' voice to the reliable veracity of its 'private' (and often disguised) counterpart.

[228] The dynamics of communication between Dido and Aeneas, too, acquire a different complexion if we accept that Dido's words at 435–436 are veined with threatening undertones which reverberate through the rest of Book 4. Let us return to an issue which we have already touched upon while dissecting the multiple meanings of *morte*. How do the addressees of Dido's words react to her message? There is no doubt that Anna remains unaware of both the suicidal and the homicidal implications of 435–436, as the narrator points out at 500–502, but the real issue is what exactly Aeneas is able to read in those words. The answer the text suggests, I believe, is: nothing, none of the complex and contradictory meanings which can potentially be teased out of Dido's words. If Aeneas had perceived any threat against himself and his men he would in all likelihood do more than shed *lacrimae inanes* 'ineffectual tears' (449) as he hears Anna[360], and would not have needed Mercury to push him into leaving at 560–570. I suggest that we should take line 440 (*fata obstant placidasque viri deus obstruit auris* 'Fate withstands and heaven seals his kindly, mortal ears') to imply that Aeneas is prevented from appreciating fully the implications of what Anna is reporting[361]; he understands, for sure, the ostensible meaning of the request, and turns it down, but superior powers prevent him from appreciating the subtler implications of Dido's words. We may still react coldly – and suspiciously (he rather does protest too much) – to Aeneas' self-excusing and 'strangely insensitive'[362] confession to Dido in the Underworld (6.463–464 *nec credere quivi / hunc tantum tibi me discessu*

359 Lyne 1994.

360 The precise scope of reference of *lacrimae inanes* at 4.449 (Aeneas, Dido, or both), is debated, but see Horsfall 1995: 125 n. 20, as well as Jackson Knight 1966: 252, Martindale 1993: 120–121.

361 DServius *ad* 562: 'Demens inprobat eius sensum qui nec videat nec audiat.'

362 Austin on 6.464.

ferre dolorem 'nor could I deem my going thence would bring on you distress so deep'), but his statement does chime with the feelings[363] the narrator assigns to Anna in the thick of the action[364].

[229] Aeneas' words are often considered economical with the truth, because they are inconsistent with the intimation of suicide which Dido can be seen to voice in *cumulatam morte remittam*. For one thing, as we have seen, reference to an impending suicide is only one of the possible ways in which this statement can be interpreted. Moreover, if we accept that those words also contain a veiled threat which, as we gather from his subsequent behaviour, Aeneas has failed to detect, then we are bound to conclude that the metaphorical 'deafness' forced upon him at 4.440 prevents his understanding of all the implications of the message, even those which he would have been well advised to grasp immediately and act upon in self-defense. It is of course irrelevant to speculate about what Aeneas could or would have done had he realised that Dido was contemplating suicide. But we should not assume that what he says at 6.463–64 is only a lame, self-serving excuse. Aeneas' metaphorical 'deafness' is an appropriate counterpart to his taciturnity throughout the book[365]. His inability to assess the subtleties and implications of Dido's words matches the silence he keeps after the relatively short reply at 333–361. Any more extensive engagement with Dido, any teasing out of her *arrière-pensées* or his own suspicions would destroy the dilatory space in which Aeneas, counter-intuitively, postpones his departure, and in which Dido forgoes her chance to avenge his betrayal. Some clouding and weakening of perception are essential to the plot, and Mercury calls *dementia* what modernity would probably regard as symptoms of a depressive denial in the face of traumatic events, or, indeed, the outcome of a tragic lack of resolve between the desire to act and its opposite,

363 4.500-503: *non tamen Anna novis praetexere funera sacris / germanam credit, nec tantos mente furores / concipit aut graviora timet quam morte Sychaei. / ergo iussa parat* 'Yet Anna thinks not that her sister veils her death under these strange rites; her mind dreams not of such frenzy nor does she fear anything worse than when Sychaeus died. So she makes ready as bidden'. Yet in both of these cases as well methodological consistency makes it fair to entertain the possibility that Anna and Aeneas are protesting too much, and their denials may be at least in part disingenuous, or unconsciously colluding with the feelings they are denying.

364 Silius's Anna is unable to foresee Dido's death even with help of terrifying dreams (8.121–125).

365 About which see Feeney 1983.

much as in Hamlet's case[366]. Imperfect or at least incomplete levels of understanding and awareness (for instance of poetic models), play an important part in Dido's story from early on. She may not be aware that she is following in Medea's dangerous footsteps, nor is Aeneas any more attuned to this eventuality. But equally, she appears oblivious to the fact that she is another Ariadne, too. Were things dif- **[230]** ferent, she would probably refrain from begging Aeneas to reconsider his decision to depart *per conubia nostra*, *per inceptos hymenaeos* (4.316), a poignant echo of Ariadne's words in Catullus 64.141 (*sed conubia nostra*, *sed optatos hymenaeos*[367]), uttered, to be sure, once she has fully realised Theseus' betrayal[368].

The ethical complexity of the story and the subtlety of Virgil's characterization are deepened, not lessened, by this realization. Dido emerges as a powerful prototype for the ambivalent heroines soon to be found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* or Seneca's tragedies, women who combine extremes of behaviour in their readiness to love and hate with equal intensity, and who are all imbued, to a different extent, with the dazzling energy of Bacchic frenzy[369]. The threats implicit in Dido's speech at several crucial junctures of Book 4 are never realized. If they were, they would foreshadow Procne's crimes, and echo the bloody murders of Medea and Agave. In Dido's torn emotions and conflictual behaviour we can trace an archetypical obsession with dangerous women which runs through Greek and Latin literature. Yet far from making it easier to 'take sides,' or re-demonising Dido as the incarnation of everything Aeneas must learn to despise, letting the disturbing voices of Book 4 speak (or hiss) more freely traps knowing readers in the emotional

366 Where hesitation and delay are also markers of the 'infinite regress' which characterizes all revenge plots: see for instance Charney 1987.

367 The Catullan flavour of the following *si bene quid de te merui* (4.317) seals the allusion.

368 Ariadne's absence from Dido's (and Aeneas') consciousness at this stage should be kept in mind when assessing the potential erasure (Casali 1995) of her story in the temple reliefs at the beginning of Book 6.

369 Virgil famously 'deepens the enigma of his attitude to Dido' (Austin on 6.449) with the choice of her companions in the *lugentes campi*, who notably include Phaedra and Pasiphae (on the importance of Cretan elements, and specifically of Pasiphae's story, in the symbolic texture of the poem see Miller 1995: 236–239), as well as Euadne, another instance of 'tragic wedding' (cf. Seaford 1987: 121–122). In Virgil's underworld these women are all victims of *duri magno … amore dolores / polluto* (5.5-6).

whirlpool of Virgil's plot, and makes it ever more difficult to separate controlled intertextual analysis of the *Aeneid* from the spectre of (our own) unconscious fears[370].

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Fig. 24: Edward Poynter (1836–1919), The Catapult (1868). Oil on canvas, 155.5 x 183.8 cm (61.2 x 72.3 in). Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Catapulta_by_Edward_Poynter.jpg

The Latin Inscription on the catapult reads: *Delenda est Carthago. SPQR* [= *Senatus Populusque Romanus*] 'Carthage must be destroyed. The Senate and People of Rome'

Chapter 8: Translating Empire from Carthage to Rome

Josephine Crawley Quinn

> *The Roman people, destined to acquire wealth by conquest, and by the spoil of provinces; the Carthaginians, intent on the returns of merchandise, and the produce of commercial settlements, must have filled the streets of their several capitals with men of a different disposition and aspect. The Roman laid hold of his sword when he wished to be great, and the state found her armies prepared in the dwellings of her people. The Carthaginian retired to his counter on a similar project; and, when the state was alarmed, or had resolved on a war, lent of his profits to purchase an army abroad.*[1]

SO THE SCOTTISH PHILOSOPHER Adam Ferguson summarized the fundamental differences between Romans and Carthaginians, and between their attitudes to empire, in 1767. This is a typical intervention in a conversation carried on throughout the long eighteenth century about the right way to think about Carthage and Rome, and, through them, about emerging European states. This conversation tended to emphasize the differences between the two cities, contrasting in particular their imperial practices—Roman territory with Carthaginian colonies, Roman conquest with Carthaginian trade, Rome's citizen militia with Carthage's reliance on mercenaries—and distinguishing between fundamentally different approaches to geopolitics: empires of the land and empires of the sea.[2]

* Originally published in *Classical Philology* 112.3, 312–31, https://doi.org/10.1086/692761

1 Ferguson 1767, 291, quoted in Brooke 2017.

2 Christopher Brooke has discussed this topic and the relevant texts in detail: Brooke 2017.

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This set of contrasts, which long framed and conditioned modern understandings of the two cities and their empires, was based on ancient sources, and in particular the account found in the histories of Polybius.[3] My contention here, however, is that a narrow focus on the differences of detail between Carthage and Rome noted by contemporary commentators has led to a neglect of the larger parallels and inheritances they underlined, and in so doing obscures the extent to which Rome inherited Carthaginian practices and ideologies of empire. My aim is not to establish whether the two cities really were fundamentally similar or different in this respect: like "continuity and change," this is a yes/yes question, and it is in any case now widely accepted that they both exercised sig- **[313]** nificant power over both land and sea, at least from the fourth century BCE.[4] Instead, I want first to explore the contrast between modern and ancient perceptions of the relationship between the two empires in more detail, and then to investigate some specific examples of imperial practices and ideologies that might have transferred to Rome along with Carthage's territory and subjects.

Contrasting Models

The ancient struggle between Rome and Carthage was reborn in the early modern period, as Europe's intellectual elite constructed—and occasionally deconstructed—a series of oppositions between the ancient cities, mapping them explicitly onto modern states.[5] In the seventeenth century the standard modern comparison was between Britain, described by Milton in 1660 as aspiring to be "another Rome in the West,"[6] and its great competitor for the control of international trade, the Dutch United Provinces, which were popularly associated with Phoenician Carthage. Military disputes between the two were often described in terms of the Punic Wars, most famously in 1673, when the Earl of Shaftesbury declared in Parliament, "*Delenda est Carthago*" ("Carthage

3 See Vlassopoulos 2010, 31–33 on the importance of ancient history in eighteenth-century intellectual culture.

4 Maritime Rome: e.g., Steinby 2014, 34–40. Territorial Carthage: e.g., Quinn 2012/2013 [2014], 25, with references.

5 This section draws on chapter 9 in Quinn 2018.

6 Milton 2013, 484–85.

must be destroyed").[7] By the mid–1670s, however, the Dutch star was in decline, England was the world's leading maritime power, and it was the French who presented the greatest threat to their interests. The scholarly opposition between Carthage and Rome thrived on the military friction between England and France throughout the eighteenth century.[8]

One great English champion of the Carthaginians in this period was Edward Wortley Montagu, described succinctly in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* as a "traveller and criminal." He was also a soldier, an Arabic scholar, and a member of Parliament. His Reflections on the *Rise and Fall of the Antient Republics Adapted to the Present State of Great Britain* was first published in 1759 during the Seven Years War between England and France, and it was popular, going through four editions by 1778. Montagu makes the four-way equation between Carthage, Rome, Britain, and France crystal clear:

> Of all the free states whose memory is preserved to us in history, Carthage bears the nearest resemblance to Britain, both in her commerce, opulence, sovereignty of the sea, and her method of carrying on her land-wars by foreign mercenaries. If to these we add the vicinity of the Carthaginians to the Romans, the most formidable and most rapacious people at that time in Europe, and the specific difference, as I may term it, of the respective military force of each nation, the situation of Carthage with respect to Rome, seems greatly analogous to that of Britain with respect to France, at least for this last century.[9]

Britain, he says, should learn from the failures of Carthage, a city that relied too much on mercenaries, "[s]trangers to that heart-felt affection, that enthusiastic love of their country, which warms the heart of free citizens, and fires them with **[314]** the glorious emulation of fighting to the last drop of blood in defence of their common mother."[10]

The comparison and contrast was also popular in France. In 1734, in a work published in English as *The Causes of the Grandeur and Declension of the Romans*, Montesquieu argued that "Carthage, in warring with all its riches against the poverty of Rome, had a disadvantage in this very circumstance; for gold and silver may be exhausted, but virtue,

7 Grey 1763, II, p. 2: 5 February 1673.
8 Vance 2000, 216–17.
9 Montagu 1759, 161.
10 Montagu 1759, 174; cf. 162–63, 169, 170, 172–73, 179, 198–99.

perseverance, strength and poverty are inexhaustible."[11] For him this was one part of a broader critique of Rome as an appropriate model for European states, including France,[12] but others exploited the ancient contrast for more straightforwardly nationalist purposes: the rhetoric of Carthage's destruction came full circle in 1798 when Paul Gauran, a deputy in the post-revolutionary Conseil de Cinq Cents, advocated war on the English government, "oppresseur de toutes les Nations," by evoking the traditional cry, "Que Carthage soit détruite!"[13]

This is all quite different from the way that contemporary scholars of the Hellenistic period framed the relationship between Carthage and Rome, as similar cities with similar histories. Eratosthenes of Cyrene, chief librarian at Alexandria in the third century BCE, compared the political conduct of these two barbarian civilizations: "not only are many of the Greeks bad, but many of the Barbarians are refined, Indians and Arians, for example, and, further, Romans and Carthaginians, who carry on their governments so admirably" (Strabo 1.4.9), while earlier in the same century Timaeus of Tauromenium had even claimed that Rome was founded in the same year as Carthage (814/3 BCE).[14] Our best source on this topic, as Montagu and Montesquieu were well aware, is the Greek historian Polybius of Megalopolis, writing in Rome in the second century BCE. However, while Polybius' account details differences between Carthage and Rome, these are usually taken out of context by later scholars, and therefore misunderstood: his basic point is that Carthage and Rome are at different points on a very similar political and imperial trajectory.

Polybius and the Succession of Empires

Polybius took the view that the good governance Eratosthenes observed at Carthage and Rome was a result of their mixed constitutions, a form of *politeia* restricted for him to just three cities (Polyb. 6.51.1–2):

11 Montesquieu 1777, 3: 21. The French title is *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*.

12 Brooke 2017, with examples of the subversion of the basic oppositional model by, among others, Pierre-Daniel Huet, Voltaire, and Adam Smith.

13 *Gazette nationale de France* 1798, p. 715. On the sentiment of "perfide Albion" in France, see Schmidt 1953 and Bernal 1987, 341–42, along with the contemporary report at Rawlinson 1889, 62.

14 *BNJ* 566 F 60 (= Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom*. 1.74.1), with Feeney 2007, 92–95.

> The constitution of the Carthaginians seems to me to have been well framed from the first as regards its general distinctions. For they had kings, and the *gerontion* was an aristocratic body, and the multitude were masters of matters appropriate to them, and the way in which the whole system worked was very similar in general to that of the Romans and the Spartans.[15]

[315] Furthermore, as he explains in an extended comparison in Book 6 of his *Histories*, Carthage and Rome were more similar to each other than either was to Sparta, because their constitutions allowed them to extend their power well beyond their own confines, while the Spartan *politeia*—and in particular the Spartans' use of crops and iron bars for money—was unsuited to the exercise of power over others (Polyb. 6.49–50). Nonetheless, despite their fundamental political and imperial parallels, Carthage and Rome were at different stages in the journey all states make through growth and then decline, and so by the time of the Second Punic War (Polyb. 6.51.3, 6–8):

> the Carthaginian constitution had deteriorated, and the Roman one improved . . . the demos had already acquired the greatest power in decision-making among the Carthaginians, while among the Romans the senate was the driving force. Since in the one case the many took decisions, and in the other the best, the decisions of the Romans on public matters were better. As a result, although they met very difficult obstacles, through good decision-making they finally conquered the Carthaginians in the war.

This passage lies directly behind a remark made by Montesquieu that "at Rome, which was governed by laws, the people entrusted the senate with the management of affairs; but in Carthage, which was governed by fraud and dissoluteness, the people would themselves transact all things,"[16] and Polybius goes on to examine a number of the differences "of detail" (*ta kata meros*) between the states that led to Roman victory over Hannibal that were also seized upon by eighteenth-century writers. He contrasts Rome's extensive military training on land with Carthage's focus on preparation for naval campaigns, and explains Carthage's neglect of the former as due to their employment of foreign mercenaries:

15 See further on the benefits of the mixed constitution Polyb. 6.3.7, with 6.10.6–11, and on Sparta, Carthage, and Rome, 6.47.9.

16 Montesquieu 1777, 3: 21.

for him Rome's reliance on the bravery of its own citizens helped ensure its eventual success on both land and sea (Polyb. 6.52–55; cf. 1.65.7 and 3.109.6– 8). He also notes the cities' distinctive laws and customs relating to the acquisition of wealth—in Carthage "nothing is shameful that leads to profit"—and the centrality of religion to the Roman state, "in order to gratify the common people" (Polyb. 6.56.2, 9). At the same time, however, he constructs a broader conceptual framework largely ignored by later writers, not only of similar governance within the two cities, and of a similar political trajectory, but also of a similar imperial trajectory, and even of direct imperial inheritance.

Polybius concludes his comparison between Carthage and Rome at 6.57 with a reiteration of the inevitability of decline, and—though neither state is explicitly named—a prediction that Rome will suffer the same democratic fate he has already ascribed to Carthage in similar terms at 6.51: when a state has reached the heights of prosperity and power, he says, its wealth leads its citizens into extravagance and rivalry, in particular for political office, which provoke a deterioration (Polyb. 6.57.7–8):

> **[316]** And the people will be taken to be the authors of this change, when from some they seem to be suffering injustices as a result of greed, and by others they are filled with flattery out of love of office. For then, enraged, and following their passions, they will refuse any longer to obey, and they will demand not equality with their leaders, but all or the greatest part themselves.

The logic of Polybius' argument suggests furthermore that the same principles and dynamic apply to empires as to constitutions, with Rome following the same path as Carthage, to the same eventual end. At the beginning of his *Histories*, Polybius describes the limitations of the three pre-Roman imperial powers in the East. The Persians ruled in Asia but failed in their attempts to extend their power further; the Spartans managed no more than a brief rule over Greece; and even the Macedonians, who conquered Europe from the Adriatic to the Danube, and overthrew the Persians in Asia (Polyb. 1.2.5–7):

> although they seemed peerless both territorially and politically, still left the larger part of the inhabited world outside it. For they never tried to contend for Sicily, Sardinia, or Libya at all, and in Europe they were, to speak plainly, ignorant of the most warlike of the western peoples. While the Romans have subjected to themselves not some part but practically the whole of the inhabited world.

In order to do so, he implies, the Romans had to look to Carthage instead as an example, since he says just a few chapters later that by 264 "the Carthaginians had not only subjected Libya, but many parts of Iberia as well, and that they had also taken possession of all the islands in the Sardinian and Tyrrhenian seas" and that beyond Syracuse and Messene "they were in control of almost all the rest of Sicily" (Polyb. 1.10.5, 8). Over the three Punic wars that followed, the Romans inherited all those territorial possessions of Carthage, and Polybius' language continues to emphasize the specificity of that inheritance: in 218, the Carthaginians controlled north Africa from the altars of Philaenus to the pillars of Heracles (Polyb. 3.39.2); in 146, Scipio Aemilianus brought Africa from the altars of Philaenus to the pillars of Heracles under Roman power (10.40.7).

In practical terms, this is a simple acquisition of territory. But Polybius also presents episodes bookending these Punic wars that link the two empires more closely, suggesting that the Romans inherited more from Carthage than land. The first of these is of course the famous story about a Carthaginian decked vessel that was captured in a battle in the straits of Sicily in 264 and used as a model for a new Roman naval fleet, which eventually turned the course of the war Rome's way (Polyb. 1.20), an episode treated at length by Tom Biggs elsewhere in this special issue. The second comes at the end of the Third Punic War, when Polybius himself stands beside Scipio as Carthage burns, and "turning to me at once and grasping my hand, Scipio said 'A glorious moment, Polybius, but I have a dread foreboding that some day the same doom will be pronounced upon my own country'" (Polyb. 38.21.1; cf. Diod. Sic. 32.24 and App. *Pun*. 132). This presents an acknowledgment on the part of a Roman that the two cities were traveling the same imperial path, and according to Polybius, Scipio is right to be concerned: "Judgments concerning either the victors or the vanquished which are based on nothing more than the outcome of battles cannot possibly be final; for what have appeared to be the most striking successes have often, if they are **[317]** not rightly used, brought the most overwhelming disasters in their train" (3.4.4–5). On his account, then, empires follow a similar dynamic and pathway to constitutions, and Carthaginian empire was not only a forerunner to Rome in the West, just as the Macedonian kingdoms were in the East, but a source of practical and political lessons, a phenomenon now known as "imperial transfer."

Imperial Cooperation and Transfer

Although there have been endless studies of empires in terms of their conflicts, many fewer have dealt with their interactions with and even reliance on each other to achieve their own imperial goals. Recently, however, several conferences and publications have focused on such encounters between empires, tackling the question of how nineteenth- and twentieth-century imperial states cooperated and collaborated with one another, and learned imperial technologies and techniques from one another.[17] The term "imperial transfer" is the most common one now used to describe "the way empires designed their policies by referring to their imperial predecessors, [which] provided a reliable method to prevent 'the provincialism of each empire prevailing' on the one hand, and to legitimize imperial policies on the other."[18] And these studies have concluded that the "circulation and transfers of specific knowledge orders and power practices were crucial for the implementation as well as the durability of empires."[19]

Is this also true of the ancient world, and in particular of the two empires under consideration here? Although Robert Palmer has reconstructed the history of cultural and commercial contact between the two cities in his account of Rome and Carthage at Peace, there has been little focus on active collaboration and transfer in the sphere of empire.[20] I want to suggest, however, that the Roman conquest of the West did involve both imperial cooperation and imperial transfer.

Examples of practical cooperation and collaboration between Carthage and Rome in the interests of their respective empires can easily be found: as far back as the sixth century, the famous treaty made between Rome and Carthage binds them at least in theory to respect each other's spheres of hegemony, and to control their own merchants to protect the commercial interests of the other, and it also suggests that Carthage might actively aid Rome's imperial expansion: if they take a city of Latins not subject to Rome, they should deliver that city up to Rome (Polyb. 3.22.12; cf. 3.24.5 for a fourth-century renewal). Those provisions were

17 E.g., Aust and Schönpflug 2007; Leonhard and Hirschhausen 2011; Barth and Cvetkovski 2015.
18 Barth and Cvetkovski 2015, 9, quoting Hart 2008, 16.
19 Barth and Cvetkovski 2015, 7.
20 Palmer 1997.

probably largely theoretical, but during Rome's war against Pyrrhus of Epirus, the Carthaginians provided naval transport for Roman troops, destroyed Pyrrhus' supplies, and intercepted his fleet on its way to Italy.[21] Rome repaid these favors during the Mercenary War by returning many Carthaginian prisoners, forbidding its merchants to trade with the rebels, and refusing offers of defection from Sardinia and Utica (Polyb. 1.83).

[318] As for imperial transfer, the case that Rome learned a lot from the Greek East in the process of conquest there is familiar, with the role played in that education by existing Eastern empires most vividly illustrated in the early second century when the Roman general T. Quinctius Flamininus adopted the rhetoric of Greek freedom and the iconography of Hellenistic kingship.[22] But how far did Rome treat Carthage as a source of imperial models, methods, and technologies?

The poverty of the evidence for this topic cannot be overestimated, and Sandrine Crouzet has demonstrated with stinging clarity how much modern scholars have relied on assumed parallels with Roman practices and categories to interpret what little evidence there is for Carthaginian ones.[23] An interest in acquiring technical expertise from Carthage in the pursuit of empire, however, is suggested by Polybius' story of the transfer of naval technology during the First Punic War, as well as by the senate's resolution after the Third Punic War to have the works of the Carthaginian agronomist Mago translated into Latin, an aid no doubt in the agricultural exploitation of their new lands in Mago's own Africa as well as in Italy (Plin. *HN* 18.22–23). And I think we can go further. The rest of this paper will survey a series of similarities between Carthage and Rome in the ways they treated their subjects, managed military recruitment, conceptualized borders, formulated treaties, and organized taxation. Some are most likely to be simple coincidences; others suggest, and sometimes explicitly demonstrate, the active Roman exploitation of Carthaginian ideas and technologies.

21 Diod. Sic. 22.7.5, with Miles 2010, 415 n. 30 and Plut. *Vit. Pyrrh.* 24.1.

22 Gruen 1984 is a classic account; on Flamininus' rhetoric, see Polyb. 18.46.5 with Walsh 1996; on his use of Hellenistic imagery, practices, and techniques on the gold staters that he struck in Greece ca. 196, see most recently Thonemann 2015, 169–70, with bibliography, and the reservation that this unusual coinage represented the "the road not taken by Rome in the eastern Mediterranean in the last two centuries BC" (p. 170).

23 Crouzet 2003.

Strategies of Subjection

The chance survival of a remarkable document contains a self-presentation of late Carthaginian empire. In 215 BCE, a treaty was concluded between Hannibal and a representative of Philip V of Macedon. Livy tells us that this document was retrieved by Roman naval officers from a Macedonian ship as Philip's ambassador Xenophanes returned from his meeting with Hannibal (Livy 23.33–34); the text itself is preserved in a fragmentary book of Polybius (7.9). It is of course possible under these circumstances that the document is not genuine, but it must have been plausible enough to convince contemporaries, including Polybius—and in fact there are good reasons to consider it authentic: the format, a covenant that begins with a long invocation of a variety of gods, is distinctly Near Eastern, and aspects of the language used strongly suggest that the Greek is a translation from Punic.[24] This translation would have been made in Hannibal's camp, and so this document gives us a more than usually direct window onto Carthage's own perception and presentation of its empire in the later third century, including the fullest list we possess of Carthage's associates in that empire. In this treaty, Philip V and his allies agree to protect (Polyb. 7.9.5–7):

> the Carthaginians—the lords [*kurioi*]—and Hannibal the general, and those with him, and all subordinate [*huparchoi*] to the Carthaginians, who use the same laws, likewise the Uticans, **[319]** and the cities and peoples who are subject [*hupēkoa*] to the Carthaginians, and our soldiers and allies and cities and peoples in Italy, Keltia, and Liguria, with whom we are in friendship or with whomsoever in this country we may hereafter enter into friendship and alliance.[25]

Modern analyses of the categories listed here have often suggested that they mirror juridical categories found at Rome—that the term *kurioi*

24 Bickerman 1944; 1952; Barré 1983.

25 κυρίους Καρχηδονίους καὶ Ἀννίβαν τὸν στρατηγὸν καὶ τοὺς μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ καὶ τοὺς Καρχηδονίων ὑπάρχους, ὅσοι τοῖς αὐτοῖς νόμοις χρῶνται, καὶ Ἰτυκαίους, καὶ ὅσαι πόλεις καὶ ἔθνη Καρχηδονίων ὑπήκοα, καὶ τοὺς στρατιώτας καὶ τοὺς συμμάχους, καὶ πάσας πόλεις καὶ ἔθνη, πρὸς ἃ ἐστιν ἡμῖν ἥ τε φιλία τῶν ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ καὶ Κελτίᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ Λιγυστίνῃ, καὶ πρὸς οὕστινας ἡμῖν ἂν γένηται φιλία καὶ συμμαχία ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χώρᾳ.

denoted citizenship *optimo iure*, for instance,[26] or that the *huparchoi*, who share *nomoi* with the Carthaginians, mapped on to the Roman category of the "Latin name."[27] These suggestions have been comprehensively refuted in recent years, and I want to draw attention instead to the way in which a whole variety of Carthage's allies, dependents, and subjects are arranged in a hierarchical structure which would have discouraged them from making common cause, and may well have cut across traditional local power structures and boundaries.

A similar approach can be found in Rome's descriptions of its own allies: the earliest direct evidence is the *lex de repetundis*, our first extant Roman law on bronze (ca. 123/2 BCE), which begins by listing the people who can use this legislation against extortion practiced by Romans: "[... anyone of the allies] either of the Latin name or of external nations, or anyone in the discretion, sway, power, or friendship [of the Roman people]."[28] Here again subjects are divided into a complex hierarchy under one supreme commander state, and the document identifies a specific inner circle of allies, in this case of the Latin name, a group who shared a number of rights with Roman citizens, along with the burdens and booty of war. Divide-and-rule is not an unusual imperial technique, however, and the similarities here may well be coincidental.

Military Recruitment

The same may well be true of military recruitment. The Roman and Carthaginian armies are usually seen—in line with one of Polybius' "differences of detail"— as fundamentally dissimilar operations, one based on citizen soldiers, the other on foreign mercenaries. The ancient sources, however, record a similar range of recruitment strategies in the two cities.

Diodorus provides a snapshot of Carthaginian strategy circa 397, when the city's generals were preparing for an assault on Sicily. He explains that they sent representatives "with large sums of money"

26 Bickerman 1944, 97, with earlier bibliography; *contra*, see *HCP*, ad loc. and ad 10.16.1

27 See Crouzet 2003, 656–59, for the long history of this hypothesis, from Mommsen to Walbank, and for its many inadequacies.

28 [— *quoi socio no*]*minisve Latini exterarumve nationum, quoive in arbitratu dicione potestate amicitiav*[*e populi Romanei* —]. For the restorations and further commentary, see Lintott 1992, ad loc., and (with minor variations) *Roman Statutes*, ad loc.

to levy mercenaries (*xenologein*) from the Balearics and Iberia, while they themselves canvassed Libya registering (*katagraphontes*) soldiers from among the Libyans, Phoenicians, and (presumably Carthaginian) citizens; they also summoned (*metepemponto*) troops from allied peoples and kings in Africa, including the Nomades, Marau- **[320]** sii, and peoples living in the area of Cyrene, while hiring them (*misthōsamenoi*) in Italy (Diod. Sic. 13.80.2–3). Carthage's forces are recruited here in three distinct ways: Italian, Spanish, and Balearic soldiers are hired as mercenaries, African allies send auxiliaries, and there is a registration of men from among the Libyan and Phoenician populations, including Carthage itself.

Other sources appear to confirm that Carthage's allies were liable to having troops summoned from them,[29] and that subject peoples were required to provide troops from the fifth century in Libya, and from the third in Iberia.[30] This basic three-way division between hired mercenaries, paid auxiliaries summoned from allies, and conscript troops drawn from the local Libyan and Phoenician population also fits in with the list of the troops that Hannibal left with Hasdrubal in Spain in 218, where the number of Libyans and "Libyphoenician" cavalry (450) is given separately from that of African *Nomades* made up of Massylians and Masaisylians and Makkoians and Maurusians (1800), and separately again from the 300 Iberian Ilergetes—suggesting that the division between conscripts, auxiliaries, and mercenaries was a bureaucratic reality in his army rather than simply Diodorus' interpretation (Polyb. 3.33.15).[31]

This tripartite approach is also found in Roman recruitment strategies. Beyond the immediate citizen body, Rome's military conscription of their Italian allies was organized from at least 225 BCE through the *formula togatorum* lists,[32] and the subjects they inherited from Carthage in Sicily and Spain seem to have been required to provide troops and

29 E.g., Diod. Sic. 13.80.3; 14.54.5 (Libyans and Iberians, 396); 16.67.1 ("friendly representations" to Sicilian allies in the face of impending war, 345/4); 19.106.5 (Sicilians, 311); 20.18.3 ("Libyan allies," perhaps a rather loose designation, 310).

30 Moscati 1972, 692, with references; Crouzet 2003, 685–86, on Libyan subjects, with Diod. Sic. 13.54.1 and 13.80.3.

31 Cf. the discussion of this passage at Crouzet 2003, 667.

32 Polyb. 2.23.9, cf. 2.24 and 6.21.4; *Roman Statutes* 2 (*lex agraria*) lines 21 and 50 for the phrase *formula togatorum*; Prag 2011a, 19; Kent 2012.

in some cases ships, just as they were under the previous Carthaginian regime.[33] The Romans also recruited foreign auxiliary troops and there is a reasonable amount of evidence that they hired mercenaries overseas from the late third century, directly and indirectly, despite the invective against mercenaries in public discourse.[34] Curiously, however, there is no direct evidence for the conscription of Libyans after the fall of Carthage, even during the Jugurthine War, suggesting that by the mid-second century at least, the Romans were not simply adopting existing practices in the areas they inherited from Carthage.[35] More generally, the use of conscription, auxiliaries, and mercenaries is not unusual in the ancient world, and this example may speak again more to basic similarities between the two states than to direct imperial transfer.

Imperial Space

A more suggestive example concerns the two cities' shared conceptions of imperial territory and its limits, where Rome and Carthage are on the same side of a **[321]** Hellenistic debate. It is well known that place played little role in conceptions of Roman power during the late Republic, and that correspondingly little attention was paid to the definition and construction of imperial borders in that period; indeed the only real question is over the relevance of either concept even in the Imperial period.[36] There are no geographical conceptions involved in the *lex de repetundis* discussed above, and in particular no boundaries to Roman empire or territory are mentioned, only peoples, cities, and nations within it, described in terms of their legal status (as established by Romans) and their relationship to Rome, just as in Hannibal's treaty of 215.

Imperial borders first appear in Roman documentation in the so-called *lex de provinciis praetoriis* of circa 100 BCE, where the Roman officer who

33 See Prag 2011a, 17–22 for regular and irregular levies in the provinces, with references.

34 Prag 2011b, 107–8, esp. n. 27.

35 A lack of recruitment in Africa would correspond with other evidence for the slow growth of Roman interest in its new African "province" in the later second century (Quinn 2004).

36 Purcell 1990; Whittaker 2004; Richardson 2008, 186–87. For the more general point that "cartographic" space was less important than the "hodological" routes through it in ancient conceptions, the classic text is Janni 1984, and see more recently Purves 2010, 118–58.

holds Macedonia as his province is directed to establish the boundaries of the taxation of the Chersonese as quickly as possible (*Roman Statutes* 12 Cnidus IV, 28–30). In the same law there is a reference to an earlier *lex Porcia*, according to which a Roman magistrate cannot travel outside his province, except by senatorial decree, other than for transit or reasons of state, and he is to restrain his staff from doing the same (*Roman Statutes* 12 Cnidus III, 4–15). Both imply a notion of geographical boundaries to provinces, but still not to the empire as a whole.

Where clear terrestrial boundaries around, rather than within, the Roman empire are found, they are other people's. The limit of Roman power in Africa after the destruction of Carthage, for instance, is marked by a ditch which Pliny says was agreed between Scipio Aemilianus and the kings, and which later inscriptions call the *fossa regia*— the royal ditch (Plin. *HN* 5.25; *CIL* 8.25967). Since we know that bounded territory was a concern of the Numidian kings, who had argued successfully in 201 to keep the territory that their fathers possessed as a limit to Carthaginian power, it seems likely that the *fossa regia* was originally their project, not Scipio's.[37] They might well have thought they had much to gain from a clear (and from their point of view generous) boundary to the territory that Rome would allow them to exploit; the Romans in turn accepted a convenient external border, beyond which control and certainly tax collection would be an awkward proposition.[38]

It is not clear when the boundless conception of Roman empire arose, although Polybius suggests that Roman ambitions for "universal rule and dominion" were only fully formulated after their victory in the Hannibalic war (Polyb. 1.3.6; cf. 3.2.6). Whether or not he is right about the dating and the context, could the ideology itself have been borrowed from Carthage? This may seem on the face of it an unlikely suggestion, given the familiar assertion that a frontier was established between the Syracusan and Carthaginian realms in Sicily in the fourth century, at the Halykos river. I want to suggest here though that this is a misinterpretation of what we are told about the relevant treaties, and that in fact both the Carthaginians and Romans, despite their undoubted

37 Quinn 2004, 1598–99. It has even been suggested that the existence of the *fossa regia* contributed to the formation of the Roman conception of provincial boundaries (Crawford 1990, 107 n. 68).

38 For attempts to map out its route, see Di Vita-Évrard 1985; Ferchiou 1998.

territorial interests and exploitation, thought—and acted—in terms of rimless, universal empire.

Two treaties are relevant to the problem of the Halykos river. In the 370s, the victorious Carthaginians concluded their third war with Dionysius on the terms that he should pay a war indemnity, and that both sides should hold what they possessed, "the only exception being that the Carthaginians received the city of the Selinuntians and its land [*chora*], as well as that [land] of Akragas as far as the river called Halykos" (Diod. Sic. 15.17.5). There is disagreement as to the modern identity of this river;[39] all that matters for our purposes is that it cuts through Agrigentine territory and is used here simply to clarify how much of that territory is now transferred to Carthage. It therefore forms a border between those two parcels of Agrigentine land, not, as is often claimed, between two empires or spheres of hegemony on the island.[40] Of course, this could never have been the case, since if a river bisected Sicily, it would be two islands rather than one. And although scholars have attempted to continue the boundary line north, either along the Himera river or with reference to the city of Himera itself, there is no evidence that this was done by the ancient protagonists.[41]

However, a river plays a more decisive role in a treaty made with Timoleon in 338 after the ruler of Syracuse has defeated the Carthaginians (Diod. Sic. 16.82):

> When the Carthaginians sent envoys and pleaded with him urgently, he granted them peace on the terms that all the Greek cities should be free, that the river Lykos should be the boundary of their respective territories, and that the Carthaginians might not give aid to the tyrants who were at war with Syracuse.

39 For the debates and bibliography, see Stylianou 1998, ad loc.

40 Cf. Mazzarino 1947, 47–48 ("Già a conclusione di questa guerra ... fu chiarito stabilmente che il confine tra le due epicrazie era al fiume Halykos"); Anello 1986, 169 ("si fissa un confine preciso tra i rispettivi territori"); Caven 1990, 200, 221; Vincenzo 2013, 396 ("the boundary of Carthaginian territory on Sicily were [was?] de- fined for the first time: the river Halykos formed the border"), with 19–26. Cf. Bondì 2014, 64, on the creation of a fortified frontier at the Halykos, and *BNP*, s.v. Halycus ("the demarcation line between the two spheres of control").

41 E.g., Mazzarino 1947, 48; Caven 1990, 200; Stylianou 1998, 208. Compare the treaty briefly (and allegedly) proposed by Hieronymus of Syracuse to Carthage in 215, in which the river Himera alone was to be the boundary (*horos*) between their eparchies if the Romans were driven from Sicily: Polyb. 7.4.1–2; Livy 24.6.7.

Here the river Lykos—which may or may not be the same as the Halykos of the previous agreement—is proposed by Timoleon as a boundary between Carthage and Syracuse rather than individual towns. Nonetheless, this is still a purely local phenomenon. The agreement is about distributing territory and taxation on the southern coast of Sicily: the river did not divide Greek and Sicilian interests on the island as a whole, drawing a line between geopolitical spheres.

At the same time, the mouth of the river would have marked an important boundary point to passing shipping, denoting for sailors a point from which the coast was subject to Carthaginian rule and rules. This approach to empire is characteristic of Carthage's treaties, where there is a general pattern of using natural and manmade features as way-markers to indicate maritime routes and rules, not to mark terrestrial frontiers. One example on the African coast is the "beautiful promontory" mentioned in the treaties between Carthage and Rome as a point beyond which there are restrictions on Roman shipping (Polyb. 3.22–24). **[323]** Another is the altars of the Philaeni mentioned above, which have sometimes been supposed to mark a territorial border between Carthage and Cyrene, although no southern end to such a boundary is ever mentioned in our sources; I have argued elsewhere that these low hills instead marked a point on the coast after which the ports and their tax rights were subject to Carthage.[42] Whatever the precise location of the "beautiful promontory," these two points on the African coast would have captured between them the rich lands of Byzacena and the Emporia, an area delivering to Carthage one talent a day in 193 BCE. And such maritime boundary markers are a feature not only of Carthage's treaties with Rome, but of those struck by Rome with other Western powers as well.[43]

Two other brief passages might suggest a notion of a border to Carthaginian empire, but neither is convincing. Firstly, Appian claims that in 201, at the end of the Hannibalic War, the Phoenicians were ordered by Scipio to evacuate all garrisons, towns, and land beyond "the Phoenician trenches" (App. *Pun*. 54, 59). Even if this is correct—Appian was writing much later and contradicts to some extent Polybius' near-

42 Quinn 2014.

43 See App. *Sam*. 7.1–2, on an old treaty between Rome and Tarentum; Polyb. 2.12.3 and App. *Ill*. 7 on the treaty between Rome and Pinnes of Illyria.

contemporary account of the same arrangements, where Massinissa is awarded his "ancestral lands" within boundaries that would be determined at a later date (Polyb. 15.18.5; cf. Livy 30.37.2; Cass. Dio 17.82)—there is no reason to think that these trenches were considered boundary markers by the Phoenicians: indeed, the fact that they have to withdraw from beyond them suggests in fact that they were not. And the plural is telling: whatever these trenches are, they are not for Appian a continuous land barrier, but perhaps either temporary military installations, or some form of customs point like the later Roman *limes*.[44]

Secondly, Phlegon of Tralles, one of Hadrian's freedmen, says that Eumachos of Naples, a historian of Hannibal perhaps writing as early as the second century BCE, wrote in his "Geographical Description" that when the Carthaginians dug a trench around their own *eparchia*—the word is of course Phlegon's, we do not know exactly how Eumachos described the incident—they found two giant withered corpses buried in coffins (*BNJ* 178 F 2). Whether or not this ditch is the same as the trenches mentioned by Appian, it seems plausible that it was a temporary military structure, perhaps excavated, as Duane Roller suggests, "when the Carthaginians were preparing for the Roman attack late in the Second Punic War."[45] No date is assigned to the story, however, and it is also possible that this is a version of the city's foundation legend: according to Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus, mysterious objects were repeatedly dug up as the foundations for Carthage were being laid (Just. *Epit*. 18.5.15–16).

[324] As with Rome, where limited terrestrial boundaries to Carthaginian power are found, they are imposed by others: by Timoleon in Sicily in 338, and by the Romans, on behalf of the Numidians, after the Second Punic War. In fact, what we find in the Western Mediterranean in the Hellenistic period is the clash of two ideologies of empire. One, dating back to the Bronze Age Near East (and paralleled elsewhere), is

44 Lancel (1995, 265) suggests that they would have been similar to the fortress-defences found at Ras el-Drek on the tip of Cap Bon, and apparently in use ca. 400–146. Whittaker (1978a, 339) proposes that they were an attempt to control the movements of the more nomadic populations. For Walsh (1965, 156), they are "probably the invention of a late annalist"; he points out that not to mention them is an "incredible omission" at Polyb. 15.18. For another late notion of an imperial boundary, in this case between Rome and Carthage, see Serv. ad *Aen*. 1.108.

45 *BNJ*, ad loc.

of universal empire. This is power without limits, conceptualized as a rimless hub and spoke system rather than a geographical area, exploiting people and their products rather than places.[46] The other, a much more recent innovation, involves the careful creation and maintenance of borders. The Successor Kingdoms were to some extent exponents of the former,[47] but the Seleucids in particular took great care to delineate borders to their realm,[48] and in the Western Mediterranean too it is kings and not cities who make territorial boundaries to their own and others' realms. While the kings of Syracuse and Numidia were demarcating their territories in the new Hellenistic fashion, however, Carthage and Rome still aimed for the kind of universal rule that Polybius identified, which we see again in the *lex de repetundis*, and is still a reference point in Vergil's *Aeneid* a century later, where the Romans are given *imperium sine fine* (1.279).[49]

It seems then that the Romans adopted a similar model of universal empire to that of Carthage, perhaps in the very period of direct confrontation between the two states. But even if Polybius is wrong, and a Roman notion of universal rule predated the Hannibalic War, Rome's maintenance of it along with Carthage, in the face of experimentation with other models by Hellenistic kings in East and West, cannot have been entirely unconscious or coincidental.

Treaty Formulations

The wording of treaties can take us considerably further, providing an explicit illustration of mechanisms of imperial transfer between Carthage and Rome. Those made between the two cities in the sixth and fourth centuries, and preserved by Polybius, are of Carthaginian formulation and format: not only are they quite different from the little we know of early Roman (and Greek) treaties, but Carthage is clearly the "senior" partner, overlord of far more land and sea than Rome even

46 Strootman 2014.
47 Strootman 2014, 46–52 on notions of universal empire among the successor kingdoms, with examples of the delineation of geographical limits to empire, if very broad ones.
48 Kosmin 2014, 32–37, 59–92.
49 On these Roman notions, see Nicolet 1991, 30–31; Whittaker 1994, 32.

at the time of the fourth-century treaty.[50] The first begins, "There is to be friendship between the Romans and their allies and the Carthaginians and their allies on these terms [ἐπὶ τοῖσδε]," a formulation with Near Eastern roots that is used again in the fourth-century treaty, at least in Polybius' translation, and reproduced in similar if more elaborate terms in the 215 treaty with Philip V of Macedon discussed above that must have been drafted in Hannibal's field chancellery.[51]

[325] According to Polybius, Rome then adopts exactly the same formulation in its own draft treaty with Carthage in 241 (Polyb. 1.62.8). It is worth emphasizing the importance of the context here: since this is a draft treaty, the Romans must be responsible for the choice of wording. Furthermore, on Appian's account, a treaty Rome made with Pinnes of Illyria in 228 established that Pinnes "would be a friend of the Roman people, if . . ." (App. *Ill*. 7): this is a report of rather than a quotation from the document, but the terms still appear very similar to those familiar from Rome's treaties with Carthage.[52] Considerably later, the Roman treaty with Antiochus III in 188 is quoted by Polybius as beginning "there will be friendship for all time between Antiochus and the Roman people if he acts according to the treaty" (Polyb. 21.43.1; cf. Livy 38.38.2): the wording has evolved somewhat, but the basic promise of friendship on conditions is the same. Practices were, however, already changing in the late third and second centuries, as Rome built deeper diplomatic relationships in the region, established less formal friendships, and accepted treaties offered by Greek-speaking states, and the influence of Greek traditions and initiatives on Roman alliances from the late third century onward is well documented.[53]

Taxation Policies

Finally, it is Rome's taxation practices in the regions it took from Carthage that may most vividly illustrate the transfer of imperial tactics from Carthage and from other powers. Unfortunately, all we know of Carthaginian taxation in Spain is that tax was charged on the mines, a

50 Carthage's primary role in drafting the treaties: Gruen 1984, 59–60.
51 Polyb. 3.22.4 (with Scardigli 1991, 56); 3.24.3; 7.9.5.
52 The plausibility of this borrowing is noted by Gruen (1984, 60).
53 Gruen 1984, chap. 1; Kallet-Marx 1996, 191–96.

system that Rome certainly continued to exploit on a grand scale.[54] For Sicily and Africa, however, we can say rather more.

Carthage charged taxes (*phoroi*) in Sicily in the fifth and fourth centuries. Diodorus tells us that after the fall of Selinus in 409 BCE, the citizens who had escaped were allowed to live in the city and work the fields on payment of a *phoros* to the Carthaginians (13.59.3).[55] Four years later, a treaty concluded between Carthage and Syracuse includes a provision that "the Selinuntians, Acragantians, and Himerans as well as the Gelans and Camarinans may dwell in their unfortified cities, but they shall pay a *phoros* to the Carthaginians."[56] That this *phoros* was thought at least by Diodorus to be a standard Carthaginian practice is suggested when he has a Syracusan citizen called Theodorus attack the city's tyrant Dionysius in 396 on the grounds that "should the Carthaginians defeat us **[326]** in war, they would impose a fixed tax [*phoros horismenos*], but they would not prevent us from governing the city in accordance with our ancient laws"—unlike Dionysius himself (Diod. Sic. 14.65.2).[57]

The only surviving account of the initial Roman settlement of Sicily after the First Punic War in 241 comes from Appian: the greater part of the island, which had been held by the Carthaginians, passed to the Romans, who established two kinds of taxation, a *phoros* on the population and harbor duties (*telē thalassia*) on the towns.[58] Livy agrees

54 Carthaginian origins of mine taxation: Diod. Sic. 5.38.2. Roman mine taxation: Polyb. 34.9.8–9, with Richardson 1986, 120–21.

55 Commentary on Carthaginian taxation in Sicily: Whittaker 1978b, 72–73; Bondì 1980, 185–86; 1990– 1991, 226–28 (arguing for a uniform Carthaginian system across its territories); Hans 1983, 145–46; Gallo 1992, 394 n. 53, 397 n. 60, with a useful survey of earlier bibliography.

56 Diod. Sic. 13.114: Σελινουντίους δὲ καὶ Ἀκραγαντίνους, ἔτι δ' Ἱμεραίους, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις Γελῴους καὶ Καμαριναίους οἰκεῖν μὲν ἐν ἀτειχίστοις ταῖς πόλεσι, φόρον δὲ τελεῖν τοῖς Καρχηδονίοις. The categorization of Selinus, Acragas, and Himera is not entirely clear from the text, but Diodorus has all five towns defect to Dionysius in 397, "hating as they did the heavy hand of Phoenician domination [*epikrateia*] and relishing at last the prospect of freedom" (14.47.5–6), suggesting that they were all placed in the same category in 405 (contra Whittaker 1978b, 72).

57 Whittaker (1978b, 72) suggests that all this evidence is for war indemnities rather than regular tribute, on the grounds that it applies "only to defeated enemies, not to allies," but that does not seem especially problematic. When Dionysius later pays a war indemnity of 1000 talents to Carthage, it is described in very different terms, and as a simple payment rather than a *phoros*: Diod. Sic. 15.17.5.

58 App. *Sic*. 2.6: φόρους τε αὐτοῖς ἐπέθεσαν καὶ τέλη τὰ θαλάσσια ταῖς πόλεσι μερισάμενοι στρατηγὸν ἐτήσιον ἔπεμπον ἐς Σικελίαν. See Prag forthcoming on this passage (numbered here according to the Teubner and new Loeb edition; it is

that Sicily and Sardinia were already subject to taxation (*vectigales*) before the Second Punic War (23.48.7; cf. Tac. *Ann*. 11.22). As Jonathan Prag has argued, this taxation was "one of the principal rationales for the initial Roman presence" in Sicily;[59] it was also the first taxation they levied overseas, and it seems likely that it was modeled at least in part on existing Carthaginian practice on the island.[60] Appian's wording suggests that the Roman *phoros* was charged on individuals, rather than on the cities, which were charged customs dues instead.[61] This is in line with the little we know of earlier Carthaginian practice on the island: the tax imposed on the defeated Selinuntians in 409 seems to have been in concept if not in practice a tax on individuals rather than cities, although this may have been an unusual, ad hoc arrangement.

There is no reason to think that either of these Carthaginian and Roman taxation systems were based on tithes; indeed, Diodorus' imaginary case of 396 specifically envisages a fixed tax.[62] Our first evidence for regular tithes on grain in both Sicily and Sardinia is from the 190s, and Cicero explicitly tells us the Sicilian tithing system was based on that of Hieron II, whose kingdom fell to Rome in 215 BCE (Cic. *Verr*. 3.14 –15).[63] If, however, Rome took over both earlier taxation strategies in Sicily, the Carthaginians' in 241 and Hieron's in 215, that would neatly explain Cicero's description of the first-century-BCE Roman arrangements on the island, where he distinguishes between

2.2 in the old Loeb), including the interpretation of the *telē thalassia* as harbor duties, for which see also Ferrary 1988, 18–20. We do not have direct evidence for customs duties in Carthaginian Sicily, although in 195 Hannibal mentions that Carthage does collect *vectigalia maritima*, and these seem to be of some long standing, since they are contrasted with a more recently imposed tax on Carthaginian individuals (Livy 33.47.1–2, with 30.44.11).

59 Prag 2012, 61.

60 A suggestion made briefly by Serrati (2000, 124–25), where it is assumed that both taxes are tithes.

61 The identity of the individuals to whom Appian refers is unclear: although traditionally translated as "Sicilians," the word *autois* has no obvious direct reference, presumably as a result of the process of compilation in the Byzantine period.

62 Prag 2012, 61.

63 Livy 36.2.12 (Sicily, 191), 37.2.12 (Sicily and Sardinia, 190), 42.31.8 (Sicily and Sardinia, 171). Rome had been requisitioning or otherwise receiving one-off payments of Sicilian and Sardinian grain from the time of the Second Punic War: Livy 23.41.7 (Sardinia, 215), 27.8.19 (Sicily, 209), 30.3.2 (Sicily, 203), 33.42.8 (Sicily, 196), 36.2.12 (Sicily, 191, in addition to the regular tithe?), 37.50.9 (Sicily and Sardinia, 189).

ager decumanus, on which tithes were collected, and *ager publicus*, leased instead by the cen- **[327]** sor (Cic. *Verr*. 3.12–13).[64] The *ager publicus*, he says, was the land of a "few" (*perpaucae*) cities defeated by Rome in war, which was then returned to them on payment of a tax, which Cicero elsewhere says was fixed (*certum*) by the censors (Cic. *Verr*. 5.53).[65] There is a direct parallel in the arrangements made by Carthage for the Selinuntines in 405, and it seems most likely that this category of *ager publicus* finds its roots in the land taken from Carthage by Rome in 241.[66] The organization of taxation on the *ager decumanus*, on the other hand, should date to the systemization of Roman administration on Sicily in the aftermath of their acquisition of the whole island in 215.[67]

Turning to Africa, Polybius tells us that Carthaginian public expenses were met from the revenues of Libya, and that during the First Punic War the Carthaginians demanded from the people of Libya half of their crops, and doubled the *phoroi* in their towns (Polyb. 1.71–72). It is of course likely that any tax would have been collected through towns and communities rather than directly from individuals, but Polybius' next comment, that no exemptions or discounts were allowed to individuals in difficult circumstances, suggests that, as in Sicily, it was individuals who were technically liable for the tax.[68] We do not know whether the additional land tax on the Libyans was a permanent Carthaginian institution or an emergency measure, although the high rate, at least, must have been temporary.[69] Nor do we know when either tax was instituted, although the demands of Carthage on their subjects in Libya were already sufficiently heavy in the early fourth century to provoke revolts (Diod. Sic. 14.77; 15.24.2).

According again to Appian, after Rome destroyed Carthage in 146

64 This point is underappreciated in modern scholarship: Prag 2014a, 187–89.

65 On these passages, see Prag 2014a, esp. 192–95.

66 By Cicero's time *ager publicus* is also found in the territory of Leontini, which had been within Hieron's kingdom (Cic. *Phil*. 3.22): if I am right here about the Carthaginian roots of the taxation of *ager publicus* on Sicily, there must have been some later extension of the system.

67 For a plausible theory of the Roman deployment of this taxation system throughout Sicily in the period 210–207, see Prag 2012, 60–61.

68 The one specific example we have of a Carthaginian tax paid by a town in Libya, the *vectigal* said to have been paid by the port of Lepcis in 193 of a talent a day (Livy 34.62.3), may refer to harbor dues, or to the collected taxes of a large area.

69 See Crouzet 2003, 683–85, on all we do not know about these arrangements.

the arrangements they made for Africa also involved a dual taxation system, with the imposition of a *phoros* "both on land and on individuals, men and women alike" (App. *Pun*. 135). In itself this seems to reflect the earlier Carthaginian arrangements,[70] and the poll tax in particular has been singled out as a potential borrowing from Carthage, simply because it is otherwise unattested;[71] the evidence discussed above for the Carthaginian preference for fixed taxes might add more support to that argument. The tax on land, however, also presents a plausible parallel. It is presumably the *vectigal certum* that Cicero specifies was the system of land taxation imposed by Rome on "the Hispani and most of the Poeni"—meaning here the population of North Africa—which "may be con- **[328]** sidered the reward of victory and the penalty of defeat" (Cic. *Verr*. 3.12).[72] Although Cicero explicitly contrasts this system with that of the Sicilian *ager decumanus*, it may well have been similar to—or the same as—the arrangements he outlines for *ager publicus* in Sicily, especially since both are conceptualized as a form of punishment for defeated enemies. In both cases the notion seems to be that the *vectigal* is a form of fixed rent on land that has been rightfully seized by Rome, which could again in both cases reflect earlier Carthaginian arrangements, although our only direct evidence for those is the treatment of the Selinuntines in 409.[73]

Taxation provides several possible examples of the phenomenon of imperial transfer between Carthage and Rome, but I have suggested here that there are others as well. Over the course of the third and early second century Rome reproduced, inherited, adopted, or adapted a variety of Carthaginian imperial practices and ideologies, a conclusion incompatible with a fundamental distinction between these cities' imperial projects. But in even the clearer cases of imperial transfer discussed here, it arose from observation and experimentation, not blind inheritance or mimicry, and

70 Richardson (1986, 115–16) suggests that Rome also imposed a dual system in Spain in the second century, charging a 5% grain levy in addition to the well-attested *stipendium*, described by Cicero as "fixed," but Rich (1988, 213) points out that the evidence for such a levy is weak.

71 Jones 1974, 173; Lintott 1992, 79. Poll taxes are generally considered rare until the Augustan period, although there was a royal poll tax in Hellenistic Judea (Jones 1974, 164–65, 173).

72 Land assigned to *stipendarii* in Africa is also mentioned in the *lex agraria* of 111 (lines 77, 80). See Prag 2014b on the varied meanings of *poenus* in late Republican Latin.

73 Crouzet (2003, 679) tentatively discusses the possibility that the Carthaginian land tax in Africa may have been a form of rent on land owned in principle by Carthage.

the eventual Roman solutions combined aspects of Carthaginian practice with those of other contemporary Western as well as Eastern imperial states. Carthage was not the only model Rome had, and it was increasingly not the model they followed. Just as Polybius suggests, Rome inherited empire from powers in the East and the West, and its real achievement was to translate these multiple imperial models into one.[74]

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74 I thank for advice and comments on this paper Chris Brooke, Andrzej Dudziński, Jon Prag, Denis Feeney, and the other participants in our workshop at Princeton in September 2015. I am also grateful to Philipp von Rummel for the opportunity to try these ideas out at the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Berlin in June 2016.

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Fig. 25: Jessye Norman (1945–2019) as Dido. Photo: Bernard Gotfryd (1982), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jessye_Norman_(opera_singer,_%22Dido_%26_Aenas%22),_1982.jpg

For her performance of Dido's lament ('When I am laid in earth') from the Opera *Dido and Aeneas* by Henry Purcell (1659–1695), see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOIAi2XwuWo

(*Thy hand, Belinda, darkness shades me*
On thy bosom let me rest
More I would, but Death invades me;
Death is now a welcome guest)
When I am laid in earth,
May my wrongs create
No trouble in thy breast;
Remember me, but ah! forget my fate

At the end of the clip, she cites from Gustav Mahler's *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen* 'I am lost to the world' (in German): '"Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel, in meiner Liebe, in meinem Lied." Schöner gibt's nicht.' ['"I live alone in my heaven, in my love, in my song." There is nothing more beautiful.']

Chapter 9: Rac(ializ)ing Dido

Elena Giusti

Scholarship on the *Aeneid* has rarely touched upon 'race' as such, even though a large portion of work that could have fallen under this umbrella has been variously coated in adjacent and less incendiary concepts such as 'ethnicity', 'otherness', 'difference', and the like.[1] Even in the wake of an eventual reckoning with the historical amnesia connected to the refusal to engage with 'race' in studies of premodern Western societies,[2] Virgilian scholars, with the notable exception of Shelley Haley, continue to seem uninterested in the analytical tools provided by theories and philosophies of race, especially critical race theory.[3] The present article

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This article originated from a paper delivered online to the Virgil Society on 20 March 2021 (incidentally, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination). It was then presented at Wake Forest University, SNS Pisa, Regent's Park College, Oxford, and Humboldt Universität, Berlin. I owe sincere thanks to all the colleagues and students who engaged with this piece on these various occasions, as well as to my own students at the University of Warwick, for keeping me on my toes in thinking about race and Africa in Greco-Roman antiquity. I also owe a sincere debt of gratitude to John Henderson, Fiachra Mac Góráin, and Alessandro Schiesaro for reading the piece and offering feedback, and to my co-editors Rosa Andujar and Jackie Murray, who greatly shaped my thinking about race and ancient literature over many conversations. This article is dedicated to all students of ancient Mediterranean literature who have pushed back to their advisors when being told that 'race' is not relevant to the ancient world.

1 See, among others, Syed (2005); Reed (2007); Wimperis (forthcoming); Giusti (2018), specifically on Carthaginians.

2 For Geraldine Heng (2021) 4, not naming 'race' means "to sustain the reproduction of a certain kind of past, while keeping the doors shut to tools, analyses, and resources that can name the past differently".

3 Haley (2009) and (2021). The *Symposium Cumanum* 2021 included several contributions on 'race' albeit on Virgil's reception.

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argues that such tools can give us instead significant insights into implied hierarchies, structures of differentiation, and interpersonal dynamics at work in a poem like the *Aeneid*, regardless of whether we conclude that 'race' is an actual dynamic in premodern literatures and societies or else a productive anachronism to work with.

The bulk of this contribution is a re-interpretation of Virgil's Dido in light of a renewed appreciation of how race theories transform our understanding of the dynamics between different people mentioned or implied in the course of the Libyan episode of the *Aeneid*. But before I start this discussion, it is worth explaining how I interpret the concept of 'race' and related terms ('racism', 'racialization', 'racecraft') and why I believe that a maximalist **[54]** position on the relevance of 'race' for the study of Greco-Roman antiquity can open up new avenues in the interpretation of ancient literature. Some familiarity with the theories that I shall be drawing upon (especially critical race theory) is already presupposed in this article's title, which a) invokes the truism that 'race' is a verb (a process, an event, a performance) rather than – or before becoming – a noun;[4] b) posits the verb 'to race' as an equivalent of 'to racialize'; and c) assumes that race as a concept cannot exist – nor can human races exist – without the actions and processes of racism.

What I offer here is not a study on the 'ethnicity' or 'identity' of Dido – terms that possess equally complex and potentially anachronistic baggage and that will at any rate come into question in the course of the discussion –, but on the ways in which the *Aeneid* presents Dido as implicated in processes by which arbitrarily selected differences among human beings are hypostatized and classified in hierarchies of power in such a way as to provide justification for differential and unequal treatment. As alluded to by the ambiguity as to whether to interpret the 'Dido' of this article's title as grammatical subject or direct object,[5] I wish to spotlight her simultaneously passive and active role in such processes of racialization, which I explore in two separate sections: it will emerge from this discussion that Dido in the *Aeneid* is both the victim of the Romans' racializing of Phoenicians and Carthaginians, and herself an actor of the Phoenicians' racializing of autochthonous people in North Africa.

4 Fields and Fields (2012) 96-7 speak of the substitution of 'race' for 'racism' as "the great evasion of American historical literature ... disguised as race, racism becomes something Afro-Americans are, rather than something racists do".

5 A nod to Desmond (1994).

1. Race, Racism, Racialization

It has been commonly accepted since the early twentieth century that 'race' as a biological category has no scientific basis: namely, that perceptible physical characteristics commonly associated with 'race' cannot be attributed to discrete lines of genetic descent.[6] Thus, what we talk about when we talk about 'race' is generally recognized to be a sociological and cultural rather than a biological or scientific phenomenon.[7] The term stands for "the conception or the doctrine that nature produced humankind in distinct groups"[8] – which is an illusion, of course, and a product of false consciousness, but the fact that it bears very concrete **[55]** consequences in the world means that we cannot entirely divest it of reality.[9] Thus, while 'race' is an ideological structure of thought,[10] it is also a "social and historical process",[11] connected in a two-way causal relation with the tangible phenomenon of 'racism'.

The relationship between 'race' and 'racism' exemplifies a kind of 'chicken-and-egg' causality dilemma: on the one hand, we may say that 'racism' is the practice and the acting upon the ideology of 'race' (in other words, the belief in the ideology of 'race' gives rise to practices of 'racism'), and yet it is also true that it is in turn the practice of 'racism' that reifies 'race' and bestows reality upon it as a social phenomenon. This process of validating 'race' through the practice of 'racism' has been variously defined as 'racial formation', 'racialization', or 'racecraft'. The latter term, which has enjoyed a certain popularity even among classicists,[12] was coined by sociologist Karen Fields and her sister historian Barbara Fields in continuity with 'witchcraft': both terms highlight "the ability of pre- or non-scientific modes of thought to hijack

6 James and Burgos (2022).

7 Cf. Fields and Fields (2012) 100–2, warning that "race is a social construction" can become a "trite formula" that "domesticates" the monstrosity of racism.

8 Fields and Fields (2012) 16.

9 See Omi and Winant (2015) 110, reacting against the position of racial 'eliminativism', on which see James and Burgos (2022); cf. also Fields and Fields (2012) 193, "there is nothing 'mere' about a social construct".

10 Cf. McCoskey (2012) 2: "at its most basic, race is an ideological structure that organizes and classifies perceived human variation". Sheth (2009) reads race as a 'technology' in a Foucauldian framework, "a way of organizing and managing populations" (22), emphasizing its 'causal' rather than 'descriptive' essence.

11 Omi and Winant (2015) 110.

12 See Padilla Peralta (2021); Murray (2021); Derbew (2021) and (2022).

the minds of the scientifically literate"[13] with very tangible, and very violent, historical consequences.

Emphasis on 'racial formation' or 'racialization' turns the spotlight onto the processual and social aspects of 'race', attempting a shift away from the idea that the term may indicate any recognizable lines of genetic descent in specific groups of humans. A similar shift is also encouraged by the necessary jettisoning of a subdivision of humans into 'races', and the adoption of the terminology of 'racialized groups' or 'racialized communities' instead. These are groups that become separated within societies on account of differences "that are selectively essentialized as absolute and fundamental, in order to distribute positions and powers differentially".[14] For Falguni Sheth, the production of such sets of differences, which compel society to think in terms of 'races', is a consequence of sovereign power attempting to tame potential threats against the current political order from specific groups of people. 'Race' does not simply 'divide' and 'separate' populations, but it also causes them to be "hypostatized into self-cohering wholes who are to be despised, vilified, and if not cast outside the gates of the city, then at least subordinated and exploited, if not physically or psychically managed".[15]

[56] Traditionally, racial classification is thought of as based upon differences that can be perceived as phenotypical, and such visual and bodily dimension has been seen as crucial in maintaining the working of 'race' in societies, as well as in separating it from other forms of classification, such as 'ethnicity'.[16] As Michael Omi and Howard Winant put it, 'race' "*symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies*" and it is precisely because "race is located on the body [that] it has proved a convenient means of rule, a political technology through which power can be both exercised and naturalized".[17] Thus, when thinking about 'race', most people in contemporary Western societies would think about somatic characteristics, specifically about

13 Fields and Fields (2012) 5-6.
14 Heng (2018) 27.
15 Sheth (2009) 39.
16 'Race' and 'ethnicity' are often used in conjunction, but the terms have a different history and draw on different sets of theories (Fenton 2010). Mac Sweeney (2021) tentatively interprets 'race' as classifying people according to phenotypical characteristics and 'ethnicity' according to ideas about ancestry, granting that there remains an inevitable overlap between the two.
17 Omi and Winant (2015) 110 and 247 (their emphasis).

skin colour as the primary marker used for racial classification, and about the racial separation that sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois aptly called "the color line", specifying however that such division is arbitrary and historically constituted.[18] However, many race theorists have contested excessive emphasis on the phenotypical dimension of race, pointing out that somatic traits are only one of the ways in which human beings are socially and historically racialized, with others being cultural, linguistic, geographical, historical, religious.[19] The development of such conceptualizations of race beyond a classification solely based on phenotypical characteristics allows us to explore with a renewed freedom whether comparable mechanisms of oppression could have been at work in antiquity.

Another contested misconception of racial classification, as discussed below in relation to the work of Benjamin Isaac, is the idea that the traits upon which racial classification is based should be inheritable and unchangeable, given that a belief in the inheritability of core-traits is only characteristic of what is known as 'racial essentialism' and not of racial thought as a whole.[20] Indeed, racist structures of thought can operate on the assumption that racialized groups may 'assimilate' into different groups or cultures and thus lose their specificities, and such structures are no less racist for admitting the possibility of assimilation. In contemporary Western societies, we can think for example of requests for cultural and religious minorities to adopt Western cultural traits to 'integrate' with majoritarian groups, **[57]** and of how such requests may be based on presumptions of cultural and racial superiority that end up upholding structural racisms rather than undermining them.

When we come to the study of antiquity, these last two aspects of racial formation (namely, the formation of racialized groups based on human characteristics that are not necessarily phenotypical, and the possibility for racialization to be at work even without a belief in the

18 Du Bois (2015 [originally 1903]) 7: "the problem of the color line is the problem of the Twentieth Century". Cf Omi and Winant (2015) 110: "although the concept of race invokes biologically based human characteristics (so-called 'phenotypes'), selection of these particular human features for purposes of racial signification is always and necessarily a social and historical process".

19 Already Sheth (2009); see also Lentin (2020); Törngren and Suyemoto (2022).

20 See Samuels (2015) 730: "anti-essentialism is not inherently anti-racist". But cf. Ndiaye (2022) 6, on how 'heredity' keeps 'race' distinct from other types of oppression, such as gender.

inheritability of racial difference) become key points of contention in discussions about the applicability of 'race' to the ancient Mediterranean world. It is generally agreed, since the seminal work of Frank Snowden, Jr., that ancient Greeks and Romans did not differentiate on the basis of skin colour, nor generally on the basis of physical appearance, and that they did not coherently subscribe to a belief in the inheritability of core-traits.[21] Thus, scholars of the ancient Mediterranean whose understanding of race aligns with an essentialist view, as well as scholars treating "skin colour as a transhistorical signifier of racial identity rather than merely its modern guise",[22] have often been, and continue to be, wary of talking about 'race' in Greco-Roman societies, and have instead preferred to speak of 'ethnicity' (a concept which does not by itself entail hierarchy or oppression),[23] or 'ethnic' or 'xenophobic' 'prejudice' rather than 'racism'.[24] Ultimately, the choice is justified if we adopt a definition of 'race' as dependent upon both heredity and body type. If by 'race' we mean something along the lines of 'a classification of human groups into discrete and hereditary biological categories according to perceptible human variation' then this is indeed a phenomenon whose origin may be backdated, at the very earliest, to the late Middle Ages, but which in any case becomes pervasive in Europe only as the product of colonial encounters and in the wake of the transatlantic slave trade.[25]

That Greeks and Romans were quite able to essentialize selected

21 Snowden (1970) and (1983); see also Thompson (1989); Derbew (2022). These basic views are shared by McCoskey (2012) and (2021), and Isaac (2004). Yet, while skin colour may not have been a primary marker of racial difference, it may be too hasty to underestimate the significance of somatic difference in the Greco-Roman world: see Samuels (2015), Patterson (1982) 177–9 and MacDonald (2002) 26–7 on the dangers of imagining a colourblind Greco-Roman antiquity.

22 McCoskey (2021) 18; see also Derbew (2021).

23 Murji and Solomos (2015) 8: "there is no equivalent term to racism in relation to ethnicity". On 'race' and 'ethnicity' cf. n. 16.

24 Isaac (2004), discussed below, coins the possibility of 'proto-racism'; Gruen (2011) 3 excludes Greeks and Romans even from 'xenophobia' and 'ethnocentrism'; see the criticism of McCoskey (2021) 18, building on McCoskey (2006). Cf. also Skinner (2021) for a defence of a more capacious definition of 'racism' in the ancient world.

25 See Heng (2018) on the emergence of the concept in mid-fifteenth-century Spain; cf. Hochman (2020). Derbew (2021) and (2022) 16–21 tentatively accepts the concept of 'race' (unrelated to physiognomy) in the ancient world, but vehemently denies the applicability of 'racism' to antiquity ([2021] 27 and [2022] 21). Without its connection to 'racism', however, it remains unclear how 'race' differs from mere recognition of difference.

human beings into distinguished categories for the purpose of oppression or differential treatment is not in **[58]** question. But what has prevented scholars from labelling such differentiations or oppressions as forms of 'racism' is the observation that such differentiations do not depend upon physical appearance and are only at times attributable to ideas of heredity; it also doesn't help that the Greco-Roman world does not present a coherent or unified set of thoughts on the matter. Thus, Benjamin Isaac, in his search for continuity between antiquity and modernity in the history of racism,[26] labelled some ancient forms of human classification as 'proto-racist', but only in those cases when classification depends upon characteristics considered to be 'unalterable' because of 'heredity' or 'exterior influences'.[27] In doing so, he indicated as the main distinction between "racism and ethnic and other group prejudices... that such prejudices do not deny the possibility of change at an individual or collective level in principle".[28]

Isaac illustrates this rule by discussing Roman prejudice against Carthaginians, which finally brings us closer to Dido. In a passage of *De Lege Agraria*, Cicero praises the Roman ancestors for understanding that human character is engendered not by heredity but by the nature of the territory in which people are brought up (*Leg. Agr.* 2.95):

> non ingenerantur hominibus mores tam a stirpe generis ac seminis quam ex iis rebus, quae ab ipsa natura nobis ad vitae consuetudinem suppeditantur, quibus alimur et vivimus. Carthaginienses fraudulenti et mendaces non genere, sed natura loci...
>
> Customs are not implanted in humans so much from their family stock or their genes as by those things that are supplied to us by nature itself to form our habit of living, and by which we nourish ourselves and we live. Carthaginians are deceitful and mendacious not due to their ancestry, but to the nature of their territory...

26 A potentially dangerous operation; as warned by Derbew (2021) 27: "his mapping of a prototype of 'racism' onto the past lends historical legitimacy to the violent acts chat racist perpetrators committed against Black people from the fifteenth century onwards".

27 Isaac (2004) 37–8.

28 Isaac (2004) 24.

Cicero's passage is quite exemplary of the messiness of Greco-Roman thought when it comes to ascribing prejudice to natural causes. It showcases a form of environmental or geographical determinism that Isaac disjoins from 'racism' precisely because of the lack of emphasis on heredity, even though Cicero's use of *tam ... quam* in the passage seems to imply that "family stock or genes" (*stirps generis ac seminis*) also matter, to an extent. *Punica fides*, Cicero goes on to explain, originated in Carthage's maritime setting, which caused **[59]** the Carthaginians to be exposed to trade, greed, and "love of cheating" (*studium fallendi*). For Isaac, this is the ultimate example that Romans did not show racial prejudice but rather "ethnic prejudice together with elements of geographical determinism".[29] Similarly, Erich Gruen, while admitting that this, and other Ciceronian passages, "certainly seem to imply a racial failing", exonerates Cicero from his racism on the basis of the explanation adduced in its support.[30] And yet, according to the framework that I have previously outlined, the decision as to whether racialization is at work in a given context can only be made upon examining its consequences: it is not tied to the reasons for the classification of people into clear-cut 'races' in the first place. When it comes to racism, ancient sources are held to a different standard from modernity: in contemporary Western societies, we would not be so quick to exonerate a racist comment about people belonging to a certain nationality on the basis that the commentator thought that their propensities depend on 'nurture, not nature'.[31]

It is precisely because the ancients did not differentiate coherently on the basis of supposed genetic origins that we need a different understanding of how racialization worked in the ancient world.[32] For Isaac, the main point of differentiation between ethnic and racial prejudice is whether the cause for differentiation lies within 'human control' or not.[33] But it seems to me faulty to presume that humans have more control over their nurture than they have over their nature:

29 Isaac (2004) 89.

30 Gruen (2013) 12–13; cf. also Gruen (2011) 132.

31 Gruen (2013) 13. Cf. Skinner (2021) 39: "the contrast between our willingness to 'call out' racism in contemporary society ... and the sort of special pleading which takes place on behalf of the Greeks could not be starker".

32 See Haley (2009) 30: "it is anachronistic to insist that [the Greeks and Romans) had a race as we understand it. Instead, we must search out and analyze *their* construct of race" (her emphasis).

33 Isaac (2004) 37–8 and *passim*.

Carthaginian character may not depend upon bloodline, but this does not mean that if an individual Carthaginian moves away from Carthage they will be exempt from stereotyping and vilification. This is laid bare in Plautus' *Poenulus*, where Punic stereotypes are applied to Hanno, a Carthaginian who has travelled to Calydon, but not to his nephew Agorastocles, who was abducted from Carthage in his infancy and brought up in Calydon. Neither has control over their upbringing, and Hanno's change of location does not exonerate him from the stereotypes that the soldier Antamynides applies to his whole *genus* (*sane genus hoc mulierosumst tunicis demissiciis*: "clearly this is a race of sex addicts – this kind, with their tunics hanging down", *Poen*. 1303).[34]

[60] What is also problematic is the way in which Isaac underplays the assimilationist message implied in geographical determinism, which exempts non-[Greco-]Roman people from racism only in so far as they assimilate into [Greco-]Roman culture and come to be brought up in [Greco-]Roman territory.[35] Both Cicero and Plautus show evidence of racialization not because of the reasons for racial classification, but because of the racist outcomes that such classification engenders in terms of hierarchies and power dynamics between groups of people that cannot otherwise be explained with other axes of oppression, such as social status or gender. That Cicero is interested in retention of Roman power (and land) is uncontroversial in the context of *De Lege Agraria*: Carthaginians are a means to an end, serving to racialize Campanians with equally damning characteristics of arrogance – characteristics that geographical determinism conveniently allows to become contagious, so that Cicero can predict the future wickedness of the colonists whose settling in Campania he is opposing in this portion of the speech (*Leg. Agr*. 2.97). It is not by chance that Cicero presents his view of geographical determinism as handed down to us by the Roman ancestors (*maiores*), whom "we ought to venerate and worship among the immortal gods" (*in deorum immortalium numero venerandos a nobis et colendos*, *Leg. Agr*. 2.95). At the forefront, and as backbone, of his argument is the moral

34 See Giusti (2023) on how Plautus' *Poenulus* shows racialization depending upon language and culture (especially clothing and accessories) rather than somatic traits. On Punic stereotypes in the *Poenulus* see, among others, Franko (1996); Starks (2000); Giusti (2018) 75–87.

35 Samuels (2015) 730.

superiority of the Roman people (incidentally handed down to contemporary Romans by both bloodline and nurture), which becomes a justification for retention of sovereign power against other groups, such as Carthaginians, who we can say are 'racialized' in view of their fabricated moral inferiority, regardless of the causes for such fabrication. In other words, Cicero and Plautus are engaged in the racialization of Carthaginians not just because they demarcate Carthaginians who were brought up in Carthage as fundamentally different and morally inferior to the Romans, but because the fabrication of such moral inferiority becomes a justification for the Romans' domination of Carthage, and for an unequal distribution of power in the Mediterranean between these two selectively hypostatized groups of humans.

2. Racialized Dido

Virgil's Dido has long been interpreted in terms of Roman anti-Carthaginian prejudice, even though such prejudice has never been read against an explicitly 'racial' framework of structural and historical oppression. In a paper read to the Virgil Society in 1973, Nicholas Horsfall presented her as a stereotypically threatening Carthaginian, displaying "violence, **[61]** greed, duplicity and hatred".[36] Although there is some evidence to suggest that already Homer's *Odyssey* presents a prejudiced, if not racialized, portrait of Phoenicians as greedy and untrustworthy merchants,[37] and although Horsfall himself does not downplay the model of Apollonius' Medea in *Aeneid* 4, he anchors his anti-Carthaginian reading of Dido in "Roman history and Roman prejudice".[38] Following Horsfall's cue, in the 1990s and early 2000s critics such as Sergio Casali and Alessandro Schiesaro have analyzed how intertextual networks can be explored to further highlight Dido's threat and unpredictability.[39] Others have instead turned *Punica fides* on its head, arguing that the very stereotype is used by Virgil in a collapsing of the Self-Other dialectic to single out the untrustworthiness and greed

36 Horsfall (1973–4) 12.
37 See Winter (1995) and Giusti (2023).
38 Horsfall (1973–4) 8. Cf. Isaac (2004) 324–55 and Gruen (2011) 115–40 on anti-Punic stereotypes.
39 Casali (2004–5) and (2019); Schiesaro (2005) and (2008). See Giusti (2026) on the predominance of intertextual readings in scholarship on Dido.

of Aeneas and the Trojans, who are in turn orientalized at significant junctures in the poem, especially in Book 4.[40]

As Sergio Casali pointed out,[41] we can observe this ambiguity of impiety at work in the "impious deeds" (*facta impia*) that "touch" Dido in one of her monologues: *infelix Dido*, *nunc te facta impia tangunt?* ("Wretched Dido, now you are touched by [his/your] wicked actions?", *Aen*. 4.596). The ambiguity of *facta impia* reflects a broader difficulty in attributing untrustworthiness to Dido or to Aeneas: Dido may be referring to Aeneas' breach of what she considered a marriage, a betrayal that can also be conflated with his abandonment of Creusa and, according to a tradition to which the *Aeneid* does not fail to allude, with his betrayal of Troy in exchange for his family's survival.[42] Yet she may be equally alluding to her own unfaithfulness to her dead husband Sychaeus (*non servata fides cineri promissa Sychaeo*: "I have not kept my promise to the ashes of Sychaeus", *Aen*. 4.552), and Horsfall suggests that despite Virgil eliciting mixed feelings about her, such "breach of *fides*" would have sounded "shocking to herself and to a Roman" as well as "ironically fitting for the first queen of Carthage".[43]

There clearly is an incoherence in suggesting that infidelity in widowhood would both "shock" Carthaginian Dido and at the same time adhere to the cultural standards expected from her people. More crucially, it is difficult to find anything specifically Carthaginian about Dido's rejection of the *univira* model, when public Roman *matronae* such as Augustus' sister Octavia could even forgo the customary mourning period in order to remarry for political **[62]** reasons,[44] and Livia herself was still pregnant with the child of her divorced husband when she was remarried to Octavian.[45] Nor is there anything specifically Carthaginian in Dido's murderous wishes that she had torn Aeneas apart and scattered his limbs into the sea (*Aen*. 4.600–1) or slaughtered Ascanius to feed him to his father (4.601–2): these fantasies of revenge align her with the Theban Bacchae and Colchian Medea as much as with Athenian Procne,[46]

40 Starks (1999); Reed (2007); Giusti (2018).
41 Casali (1999).
42 See Casali (1999); Scafoglio (2013); Cianciosi (2023).
43 Horsfall (1973–4) 6.
44 Plutarch, *Ant*. 31.
45 Dio 48.44.
46 Although arguably Procne's actions may be interpreted as responding to Tereus'

and do not need to rely upon the idea that Carthaginians practised child sacrifice – something that suspicious critics have also seen at work in Dido's wish that Aeneas had left her with a child.[47] More to the point are Horsfall's observations of an aetiological transformation of Dido's "hatred" against Aeneas into the historical arch-enmity, and clear cut division, between Carthaginians and Romans, a transformation that is indeed at work in her curse.[48] But I would not follow Horsfall in taking this historical "hatred" as characteristic of Carthaginians, all the more so since Livy himself reminds us, at the beginning of the third decade, not only that Hamilcar's hatred, inherited by Hannibal, had a point,[49] but that *odium* in the second Punic War was in fact reciprocal in both parties.[50]

It is beyond the purposes of this article to indict or absolve Dido of her supposed (Carthaginian) threat in the poem. What interests me is the process that allows her to be perceived as what Falguni Sheth theorized as the "unruly", namely "the element that is intuited as threatening to a political order ... because it signifies some immediate fact of difference that must be harnessed and located or categorized or classified in such a way so as not to challenge the ongoing political order".[51] This is, however, no easy task in an epic of variable and polyvalent focalization, and it is furthermore complicated by the way in which Dido's gender contributes to her othering and threat,[52] as well as by the possibility of racialization and orientalism at work for the Trojans themselves. Horsfall persuasively **[63]** shows Virgil toying with a horizon of expectations predicated upon anti-Carthaginian sentiment, and such

'barbaric' Thracian brutality. See Schiesaro (2005) and (2008) on these intertexts.

47 *Aen*. 4.327–30, with Davidson (1998); Casali (2004–5) 149–50; Schiesaro (2005) 91–2. On Carthaginians practising child sacrifice, see already Ennius, fr. 214 Sk.

48 *Aen*. 4.622–9; see Giusti (2018) 231–5.

49 See Livy 21.1 and Polybius 3.9–10 on the seizure of Sicilia and Sardinia following the first Punic War, with Giusti (2018) 186–9.

50 Livy 21.1: *odiis etiam prope maioribus certarunt quam viribus* ("they both fought with hatred greater than their strength").

51 Sheth (2009) 26, drawing upon the process of the formation of the Enemy theorized by Carl Schmitt (1996). This is not altogether dissimilar from my previous analysis of Dido and Carthage as the Enemy in Schmittian terms in Giusti (2016) and (2018), but the racial framework adds a very different emphasis on the oppressive nature, and the violent consequences, of the process.

52 See Haley (2009) and (2021) on the importance of maintaining an intersectional lens. On the threat that Dido poses to "the Roman cultural order", see especially Keith (2000) 115 and *passim*.

sentiment can be said to be based upon an historical racialization of Carthaginians from the viewpoint of Roman domination; yet we have seen that Virgil both exposes and subverts anti-Carthaginian prejudice without ever fully endorsing it. Still, what is brought to light by reading 'racialization' as intimately bound up with discourses of power and domination is that the only places in which Virgil seems to be endorsing it are crucially focalized not by the narrator, nor by Trojan Aeneas, but by the gods who support and further the cause of the Roman empire, and who may be deemed to embody an expression of sovereign power in the poem. I have mentioned that for the Fields sisters 'racecraft' is inseparable from the practice of racism as an act of violent aggression: originating "in human action and imagination", racecraft is "a kind of fingerprint evidence that racism has been on the scene".[53] In the *Aeneid*, it is telling that the only passages that explicitly apply racial stereotypes of untrustworthiness, greed and variability to Dido and her people are actually focalized through the pro-Roman divinities that simultaneously assault her: Venus and Mercury as Jupiter's messenger.

A relatively uncontroversial example of how the *Aeneid* relies upon the racialization of Carthaginians can be observed towards the end of Book 1, where the narrator tells us that Venus "clearly fears this untrustworthy household and the two-tongued Tyrians" (*quippe domum timet ambiguam Tyriosque bilinguis*, *Aen*. 1.661). The word *bilinguis* (which indicates both bilingualism or plurilingualism and treacherous character) can also be used as a slur, comparable to a line of Plautus' *Poenulus* where the slave Milphio describes polyglot Carthaginian Hanno as possessing "a two-forked tongue like a creeping beast" (*bisulci lingua quasi proserpens bestia*, *Poen*. 1034).[54] When we consider the context of Virgil's line, which is meant to provide an explanation for Venus' decision deceitfully to assault Dido by substituting Ascanius with Cupid,[55] the emphatic use of the explanatory *quippe* ("for of course she fears Carthaginian treachery...") is telling of the existence of 'racecraft' at the ideological level: *quippe* provides a racist justification for Venus' act of aggression, and at the same time appeals to the readers' racial prejudice for such

53 Fields and Fields (2012) 19.

54 See Giusti (2018) 79–81, 202. Cf Servius ad *Aen*. 4.262 on Aeneas' need to be wary among "unknown and ambiguous people" (*ignotas et bilingues... gentes*).

55 *Aen*. 1.658–60.

defence to be upheld and understood.

A comparable but less explicit mechanism had already been at work in Mercury's first intervention in the city, which caused the Carthaginians to put aside their "fierce hearts" so that Dido could offer hospitality to the Trojans (*Aen*. 1.302–4):

[64]

et iam iussa facit, ponuntque ferocia Poeni
corda volente deo; in primis regina quietum
accipit in Teucros animum mentemque benignam.

At once he carries out the commands, and the Punics put their fierce hearts aside, at the will of the god. Most of all the queen welcomes a serene spirit and a benevolent mind towards the Teucrians.

There is room for discussion as to whether *ferox* indicates savagery, as Horsfall would seem to want it,[56] or else a "warlike" and "courageous" spirit:[57] after all, Venus is described as *ferox* at *Aen*. 10.610 and for Harrison *ferocia* can be "a positive and Roman military virtue",[58] even though the fact that such "virtue" can be applied to the Romans does not mean that it loses its brutality. What is interesting, however, in terms of thinking about the ways in which racialization is inextricably tied to acts of violence, is that Mercury in this scene is making a similarly aggressive intervention to Venus' in making Dido welcoming towards the Trojans. Whatever change has been at work here, the rationale for this intervention was the presumption that Dido and the Carthaginians wouldn't receive the Trojans favourably, even though such protectiveness towards their borders need not imply *Punica fides*. Yet Mercury's suspicious attitude towards Dido, both Carthaginian and a woman in her untrustworthiness and variability, will surface again in Book 4, where he will be the one deity suggesting to Aeneas that unpredictable Dido is stirring up deceit in her heart (*illa dolos dirumque nefas in pectore versat*, 4.563) and planning stealthily to set the ships on fire (4.566–8).[59]

56 See Horsfall (1973–4) 4 on "typically brutish Punic behaviour" although without glossing *ferocia*

57 See Henry (1873) 588.

58 Harrison (1991) 222, with reference to Livy 9.6.13, *Romanam virtutem ferociamque*.

59 On Mercury's role in this scene see Giusti (2026).

A final passage that seems to capitalize on Carthaginian (or better Phoenician) stereotyping, if not racialization, is Venus' telling of Dido's background story (*Aen*. 1.336–68). This speech contains no small amount of disingenuousness and cunning, given that Venus utters it while deceiving her own son under the false pretence of being a Tyrian huntress, and it is representative of how stereotypes can vary in conjunction with other axes of othering and oppression. According to Horsfall, Venus' subtle but repeated emphasis on the role of wealth and gold in this story is meant to single out greed, in line with the stereotypical Roman portrayal of Phoenicians and Carthaginians as "a great merchant people, with an **[65]** unpleasant reputation for sharp dealing":[60] Sychaeus is said to be "very rich in gold" (*ditissimus auri*, 1.343),[61] Dido's brother Pygmalion kills him because he was "blinded by love of gold" (*auri caecus amore*, 1.349), and Dido leaves Tyre with "an incalculable weight of silver and gold" (*ignotum argenti pondus et auri*, 1.359) with which her comrades "load" the ships (*onerant ... auro*, 1.363). When recalling Dido's oxhide feat, Venus specifies that the soil was "bought" (*mercatique solum*, 1.367), downplaying the extent to which it was conquered with cunning, and thus preferring to emphasize Phoenician wealth and trading practice rather than hinting at Dido's potentially treacherous character. This is in line with Venus' minimization of Dido's cunning and agency throughout this narrative: a domestication of her character meant to make her more appealing to Aeneas, since it is after all in Venus' interests that the two join in their contested 'marriage' so that Carthage can be destroyed from within.

This downplaying of Dido's cunning in obtaining Carthage's soil is only one of the ways in which Venus limits Dido's autonomy in comparison to the tradition narrated by Pompeius Trogus, as epitomized by Justin (Just. 18.4.1–6.8). In Venus' speech, Dido is "given" by her father to Sychaeus "still untouched": as if she were a gift (*cui pater*

60 Horsfall (1973–4) 6.

61 *auri* is Huet's emendation for *agri*, which was felt to be inappropriate for a commercial and maritime people: see Conington (1863) 65. Mynors (1969) 113 accepts it; Horsfall (1973-4) 6 is doubtful. Conte (2019) 13 retains *agri* (the same clausula returns at *Aen*. 10.563), as does Stöckinger (2016) 181, arguing that it anticipates Dido's digging the treasure from the earth.

intactam dederat, *Aen*. 1.345).[62] In Trogus, her father Mutto,[63] upon dying, makes her heir to the throne together with her nine-year-old brother Pygmalion (*filio Pygmalione et Elissa filia... heredibus institutis*, Just. 18.3.4), but the Tyrians prefer to confer the kingdom upon the male heir, however young (*sed populus Pygmalioni, admodum puero, regnum tradidit*, Just. 18.4.4). It would not be a stretch to read her subsequent marriage to her uncle Acherbas (Just. 18.4.5), high priest of Melqart and second in power only to the king, as a calculated political move on Dido's part. Trogus-Justin also writes of Dido actively deceiving Pygmalion "with guile" (*fratrem dolo adgreditur*, Just. 18.4.10), an episode that Venus substitutes with Dido following the orders of her dead husband's ghost (*Aen*. 1.353–60), just like Aeneas left Troy under the instructions of dead Hector (*Aen*. 2.270–97). If Dido in Trogus prepared and loaded the ships, tricking Pygmalion and his servants into believing that she had tossed Sychaeus' treasure into the sea (Just. 18.4.10–15), in the *Aeneid* the ships with which Dido sets sail just "happen to be ready by chance" (*navis quae forte paratae*, *Aen*. 1.362), and the treasure [66] "is carried across the sea" in the passive voice (*portantur ... opes pelago*, *Aen*. 1.363–4), with as little emphasis as possible on Dido's agency in the enterprise.

Venus' narrative shows that racialization need not be consistent in its application of character (or even somatic) traits, especially when working alongside other axes of oppression such as gender or social status. In Plautus' *Poenulus*, a somatic trait such as dark skin colour is noted only for the Carthaginian women of the play, arguably in conjunction with their sexualization;[64] conversely, orientalist traits of slavishness are only applied to the men who serve as Hanno's attendants, but not to Hanno himself, who is of high Carthaginian status.[65] Similarly, racialization in Venus' speech relies heavily upon her simultaneous gendering of the narrative: male Phoenicians may be characterized as rich, greedy, and untrustworthy, but Dido herself is represented in her passivity and

62 Paschalis (1997) 49 suggests a pun on Dido and Greek *didomi* ('to give').

63 Probably Phoenician Mattan I, Mattenus in Josephus, Mettes in Servius (*ad Aen*. 1.343). Virgil calls him Belus (*Aen*. 1.621) and makes him homonymous with a Phoenician ancestor (*Aen*. 1.729); see below.

64 Milphio describes the nurse Giddenis as "dark skinned" and beautiful (*Poen*. 1112–13); Antamynides jokes on the black skin of one of Hanno's daughters (*Poen*. 1289–91); see Giusti (2023).

65 *Poen*. 978–80, see Giusti (2023).

innocence, so that Venus can make her enticing for Aeneas, while at the same time emphasizing the shockingly extraordinary circumstances that led to female leadership in this enterprise.[66]

So far, I have been focusing on the dynamics of Dido's possible racialization in the *Aeneid*, with an eye to the consequences that these may bring about in terms of justifying Roman rule in the Mediterranean against a people that was collectively presupposed to be treacherous, greedy, and wicked. What I have not yet dealt with is the question of whether there are discernible parameters, in the *Aeneid*, for attributing Carthaginians collectively to a category of less morally sound people, and for recognizing them as such. In this respect, the poem reflects the larger issues pertaining to racialization in Greco-Roman antiquity: Virgil offers no evidence as to whether Carthaginians would be recognizable by specific somatic traits, although there seems to be a possibility of characterization via clothing and accessories comparable to that presented by Plautus in the *Poenulus*.[67] Dido also doesn't seem to show specific hereditary traits, but the issue of her originally Argive bloodline matters to the extent that it joins Carthaginians and Greeks as enemies of the Trojans/Romans.

The *Aeneid* has very little to say on the somatic traits of either Dido and the Carthaginians or the local Africans.[68] With characteristically epic sketching, Virgil gives only a few details about Dido's appearance, though repeatedly emphasizing her beauty (*forma pulcherrima Dido*, 1.496; *pulcherrima Dido*, 4.60; *pulchra Dido*, 4.192). After she has died, in a passage filtered through Ascanius' recollection of her affection, we find a reference to *candida Dido* (5.571), but it is clearly forced to interpret this as a reference to fair complexion rather than purity of character,[69] and even if one were to take it as a reference to skin tone, it is crucial not to conflate it with contemporary ideas of 'whiteness'[70]

66 Servius *ad Aen*. 1.363 (*dux femina facti*): *pronuntiandum quasi mirum* ("it must be proclaimed as if incredible").

67 On which see Giusti (2023).

68 Cf. Ethiopian Memnon on the temple scenes, who is said to be "black" (*nigri Memnonis*, 1.489).

69 Ogle (1925) 269–70 refers it to the honesty of Dido's affection (cf. Horace, *Sat*. 1.5.41); Pease (1935) 473 is unconvinced. Cf. Edgeworth (1992) 114–16.

70 Cf. Haley (2009) on translating *candidus* as "bright brown" and *niger* as "bright black" with reference to *CIL* 4.1520, on which cf. Spal (2016) 97–8. Virgil contrasts *candidus* and *niger* as skin tones at *Ecl*. 2.16, but the point is that Menalcas works

The only other reference to her skin tone, when Dido appears "pale at the prospect of oncoming death" (*pallida morte futura*, 4.644), makes it quite clear that this is the characteristic *pallor* of the dying (as well as lovers), and the adjective is indeed used in connection to the dead or the underworld in most other Virgilian references.[71] The phrase is re-echoed in the description of Cleopatra on Aeneas' shield (*pallentem morte futura*, 8.709), another character whose racialization in antiquity is not dependent upon skin colour.[72]

When Dido is agonizing, Virgil mentions her "fine breast" (*pectus ... decorum*, *Aen*. 4.589) and "blond" hair (*flaventis ... comas*, 4.590), also specified when Iris cuts a "blond" lock from her head after her death (*flavum ... crinem*, 4.698). Dido's supposed blondness, albeit characteristic of epic beauty, has appeared suspicious to Virgilian commentators since antiquity: for Servius, the detail is meant to highlight her shameless morals, since well respected matrons were supposed to be brunettes.[73] DServius, on the contrary, suggests that Dido may be a fake blonde, adducing as proof a passage from Cato on matrons "anointing" their hair "with blond ashes in order to make them shine" (*flavo cinere unctitabant ut rutili essent*, DServ. *ad Aen*. 4.698).[74] The suggestion that Dido's blondness may be artificial is also put forward by Shelley Haley, who reads a significant difference between the adjectival participle *flavens* at 4.590 and the adjective *flavus* at 4.698, with the former suggesting that Dido may have made her hair golden by artificial means during the meeting with the Massylian priestess.[75] What is at any rate

outdoors while Alexis works indoors.

71 *Pallidus* and *pallens* modify the dead (*Aen*. 1.354, 8.197) or dying (*Aen*. 10.822), ghosts and shadows (*Geo*. 1.477, 3.357; *Aen*. 4.26, 4.243, 6.480; 6.275 on Morbi), Orcus and the underworld (*Geo*. 1.277, *Aen*. 8.245). Pallidus is also applied to Tisiphone (*Geo*. 3.552; *Aen*. 10.761), the Harpies (*Aen*. 3.217), the dawn (*Geo*. 1.446); *pallens* in the *Eclogues* seems reserved for the natural world (*Ecl*. 2.47, 3.39, 5.16, 6.54). Dido's *pallor* returns at *Aen*. 4.499 in the scene with the Massylian priestess. Cf also Turnus' *pallor*, highlighting his oncoming death, at *Aen*. 12.221.

72 See especially Haley (1993) 27–30 and (2009) 29–30, and MacDonald (2002) 21–44.

73 Servius *ad Aen*. 4.698: *matronis numquam flava coma dabatur, sed nigra ... huic ergo dat quasi turpi* ("matrons were never given blond hair, but black ... thus Virgil gives it to Dido as if to someone dishonourable"), with Juvenal 6.120 as evidence; see Rivoltella (2019) 221–2

74 See Rivoltella (2019) 221–2, suggesting that *rutilus* denotes artificial blondness.

75 Haley (2009) 38–9 goes on to compare the scene with Yoruban practices of ritualistic dousing of worshippers with ochre mud, arguing that Virgil may show familiarity with ancient African rites.

certain is that both denote brightness rather than colour, a detail steeped in poetic intertextuality: we are clearly meant to recall the lock of **[68]** another Libyan queen, Berenice, which described itself in Catullus as the "dedicated spoils from a blond head" (*devotae flavi verticis exuviae*, Cat. 66.62), perhaps in competition with equally blonde Ariadne (*non flavo retinens subtilem vertice mitram*, Cat. 64.63), and which was "blond" because it had to shine in the firmament (*sed nos quoque fulgeremus*, 66.61–2).[76] That the lock of Berenice is a relevant intertext for Dido is confirmed by Aeneas' reference to Catullus' version of the poem when encountering Dido in the underworld and enigmatically placing himself in the position of the lock.[77]

Other aspects of Dido's visual characterization comment directly on gender rather than on ethnicity or race. Massimo Rivoltella argues that Anna's reference to Dido's *iuventa* (*Aen*. 4.32), to be translated as "mature age" rather than "youth" is atypically ascribed to a woman, and meant to highlight how Dido's lifespan is gendered as male, in accordance with the typically masculine public and political role that she fulfils.[78] When we first meet "very beautiful Dido" (*forma pulcherrima Dido*, 1.496), in a passage where male gaze may or may not be at work,[79] she is compared, in an extended simile, to the goddess Diana, who stands out in height from her retinue of nymphs (*gradiensque deas supereminet omnes*: "and as she walks, she is the tallest of all the goddesses", 1.501). The main term of comparison, in a surprising alteration of its Homeric model, is the solemn gait of both leaders.[80] Yet we also get the impression that Dido similarly stands out from her retinue, whose gender is left unspecified (*magna iuvenum stipante caterva*: "with a great crowd of youth thronging around her", 1.497), even though she is later said to walk among the people in the (collective) masculine (*per medios*, 1.504). It may be that the correspondence with the narrative has to be sought instead in the scene immediately following: once inside the temple, Dido places herself

76 Cf. Callimachus, *Hymn to Apollo* 2.86 on "blond Libyans" (ξανθῇσι Λιβύσσῃς).

77 See *Aen*. 6.460, *invitus regina tuo de litore cessi*, and Cat. 66.39, *invita, o regina, tuo de vertice cessi*. The allusion has attracted more scholarship than I can reference here: see Johnston (1987) and Drew Griffith (1995) with further bibliography.

78 Rivoltella (2019) 209–12.

79 See Starnone (2020) and (2021a) 157–213.

80 See Rivoltella (2019) 212–15 also on the model of *Odyssey* 6.102-9 (Nausicaa compared to Artemis).

where we would expect an icon of Juno-Tanit,[81] seated "high on an elevated throne, surrounded by arms" (*saepta armis*, *solioque alte subnixa resedit*, 1.506). For David West, the expedient of specifying the height of Dido's throne is needed because "it would be unbecoming if Dido were taller than her warriors".[82] The (male) scholars' need to disconnect Dido from these arms and transform her unspecified company of youths into a retinue of male bodyguards of the queen speaks loudly to their discomfort with the gender dynamics of this passage, and of Dido's Carthage as a whole: it ends up telling us more about **[69]** the commentators' mental representation of Dido's body than the image that is actually projected by the text.[83]

To sum up, none of the references in the *Aeneid* to Dido's somatic traits contributes to a specific characterization of Dido as Carthaginian, although all of them speak to her gendered differentiation as a female leader. It is only in the specifications of clothing that the two aspects may converge. In her meeting with Aeneas, Venus says that Tyrian girls are recognizable by their custom of "carrying the quiver and wearing purple hoots with a high ankle binding" (*virginibus Tyriis mos est gestare pharetram*, | *purpureoque alte suras vincire coturno*, *Aen*. 1.336–7). This is the typical dress of huntresses, with a line closely repeated from a projected image of Diana in the *Eclogues* (*Ecl*. 7.32); yet the "purple" here also stands for a stock luxury product of Phoenicians, reminding us of their characteristic wealth and stereotypical greed just before Venus gives her potentially damning speech. Luxurious Phoenician clothing also returns in the hunting scene, first in the purple and golden ornaments of Dido's horse (*ostro ... insignis et auro*, *Aen*. 4.134), and then in Dido's purple dress (*purpuream ... vestem*, 4.139), which she wears below a recognizably "Sidonian" cloak (*Sidoniam ... chlamydem*, 4.137). In lines that are once again an evocation of Artemis/ Diana, as presented in Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis* (110–12), Dido showcases an excess of gold: from her golden quiver (*pharetra ex auro*, 4.138) to the clasp or band tying her (equally golden) hair (*crines nodantur in aurum*, 4.138),[84] up to the

81 See Austin (1971) 169.

82 West (1969) 44.

83 See Stamone (2020) 164–5 on Otto Friedrich Gruppe's proposal, in 1859, to expunge the entire simile, because he was so disturbed by the idea that Aeneas could be seduced by a sort of 'gigantessa' overtowering a crowd of men.

84 For Servius *ad loc*. this could be a *retiolum*: see Rivoltella (2019) 218.

golden brooch fastening her purple dress (*aurea ... fibula*, 4.139).

Recognizably Phoenician clothing will also be what risks turning Aeneas into a stereotypical Carthaginian: it is when Mercury sees him with "a sword studded with yellow stars of jasper" (*stellatus iaspide fulva | ensis*, 4.261–2) and "a cloak glowing with Tyrian purple" (*Tyrio ... ardebat murice laena*, 4.262),[85] with "a fine thread of gold" interwoven by Dido herself (*tenui telas discreverat auro*, 4.264), that he decides that this territory, and people, have infected him with lust, loss of manliness, and idleness. Mercury accuses Aeneas of dissipating time in Libya (*Libycis teris otia terris*, 4.271) and addresses him as *uxorius* (4.266): the word is comparable to Antamynides' use of *mulierosus* at *Poen*. 1303 in denoting excessive fondness for women (and thus a tendency to obey them, with a loss of masculinity) in a passage where the Carthaginians' loose clothing (*tunicis demissiciis*, *Poen*. 1303) becomes visually symbolic of their loose morals and unrestrained sexuality.[86] It is tempting to read **[70]** an echo of this stereotype in the loose "hanging down" of Aeneas' cloak on his shoulders (*laena | demissa ex umeris*, 4.262–3),[87] and similar associations may be implied for the *discincti Afri* on the shield (8.724) and in Dido's loosening of her girdle before her death (*in veste recincta*, 4.518).

If we finally turn to look at Dido's bloodline, the *Aeneid* seems to hide more than reveal, although it arguably leaves clues for readers to find out that Dido's heritage matters for her people's future hostility to the Romans. As critics have long recognized, since Dido descends from Agenor (*Aen*. 1.338), her heritage can be traced back to Inachus and is ultimately Argive: this makes her a distant relative of Turnus, which may suggest that the conflict portrayed in the *Aeneid* could ultimately be read as a strife between the two strains of Inachus and Dardanus over control of Italy and the Mediterranean.[88] The *Aeneid* also refers to an ancestor called "Belus" when Dido brings to the banquet a bowl from which "Belus used to drink, and all those descended from him" (*pateram, quam Belus et omnes | a Belo soliti*, 1.729–30). It is clear that this cannot be Dido's

85 Morgan (2020) suggests association between this *laena* and the flaminate.

86 Cf. the specification of the Tiber as *uxorius* at Horace, *Carm*. 1.2.19–20, contributing to the characterization of the river as out of control.

87 Starks (1999) 273–4; cf. Morgan (2020) 196 with further interpretations of the phrase at 201–3.

88 Agenor was son of Libya, daughter of Epaphus, son of Io, daughter of lnachus; see Mackie (1993); Gale (1997); Brent (2004).

homonymous father (mentioned at 1.621), but it is also problematic to identify him with Agenor's brother, who was the progenitor of another strain of the Inachid family, from which Turnus descended instead.[89]

On the one hand, the mention of Agenor and Belus serves to evoke Dido's originally Argive descent and to cast the Carthaginians as enemies of the Trojans/Romans; on the other, since the twin brothers were the sons of Libya, it may also suggest that Dido and her people believe in a matrilineal claim to the African land broadly comparable to the one that the Trojans have to Italy on the basis of their ancestor Dardanus. Yet since Libya is not, unlike Dardanus, the (male) originator of the line, we could also imagine that the *Aeneid* underwrites this potential claim, thereby showing that the Phoenicians/Carthaginians have no right of birth to the land that the Romans will end up conquering and annexing to their territory. Venus, who has a stake in downplaying Dido's leadership and in portraying her as disconnected from the land that Aeneas' descendants will end up conquering, undermines any potential claim of Dido to the land when saying that Carthage is "the city of Agenor" (*Agenoris urbem*, *Aen*. 1.338), but that "the borders are of the Libyans, a 'race' impossible to handle in war" (*sed fines Libyci*, *genus intractabile bello*, 1.339). In this way, she relegates Libya to the African borders of a city that she attempts to fashion as wholly Phoenician, while introducing neat boundaries between (urban) Phoenicians and (nomad) **[71]** Africans that will continue to play an important and divisive role in the *Aeneid*, as I shall shortly discuss.

Yet the same erasure of Dido's female ancestry and of her matrilineal claim returns elsewhere in the poem, with the effect of highlighting her isolation and queerness as *femina dux*. When Aeneas asks Dido about her parents (1.606), she mentions her father Belus (*genitor ... Belus*, 1.621), but keeps silent about her mother, who must have featured in Trogus (Just. 18.5.6–7) as the one who dissuaded Pygmalion from chasing Dido in Africa and waging war against her, a menace that remains alive in the *Aeneid* (4.43–4). Clearly enough, Dido's line is presented as a fully patrilineal one, where the "strong deeds of the fathers" (*fortia facta patrum*, *Aen*. 1.641) are embossed in gold and displayed in the palace, in "a very long series of feats traced through many male warriors from

89 It may be preferable to follow Servius *ad loc*. and interpret him as a Levantine monarch/deity equivalent to Semitic Ba'al: cf. Brent (2004) 146.

the ancient origin of the family line" (*series longissima rerum | per tot ducta viros antiqua ab origine gentis*, 1.641–2), even though that family line is most famous for its women: Io, Libya, Europa, the Danaids.[90] The *Aeneid*'s elision of these women in Dido's *genus* alienates her and excludes her from both the poem's focus on fathers and from the history of her own people.[91]

In sum, if we are looking for any major sign of ethnic or cultural difference as embodied by Virgil's Carthaginians, then we need look no further than their being ruled by a woman: in a sense, it is precisely the possibility of matrilinearity and female leadership that turns Carthage into 'the unruly', a threat not just to the Trojans but to the poem's political order, and which also becomes a catalyst for racial difference. In a necessarily intersectional reading, Dido's racialization becomes eventually indistinguishable from her gendering in Mercury's famous verdict on the untrustworthiness and mutability of her (Punic) femininity: *varium et mutabile semper | femina* ("a variable and changeable thing always | the woman": *Aen*. 4.569–70).[92]

3. Racializing Dido

Thus far, I have explored the possibility of Dido's racialization as a Phoenician and Carthaginian; yet, despite not being born and raised in Africa, Dido is also, in many **[72]** respects, an African queen, both to the extent that the Carthaginians were considered by the Romans an African people, and also because the Romans' reliance upon environmental and geographical determinism makes it so that Dido's character would inevitably be shaped by the territory into which she has moved. This possible racialization of Dido as African in the *Aeneid* has been proposed by Shelley Haley in conjunction with that of other African queens

90 On the ecphrasis of Io on Turnus' shield see Gale (1997); on the Danaids on Pallas' *balteus* see Spence (1991); Putnam (1994); Harrison (1998). Brent (2004) 153 notices a wordplay connecting Dido's silverware and Turnus' shield through evocation of their common Argive descent (*Aen*. 1.640, *inGENS ARGentum*, and 7.791, *ARGumentum inGENS*).

91 Toll (1997) 42 notes that Aeneas' epithet *pater*, used thirty-one times in the poem, may be of even greater thematic importance than *pius*. For a comparable elision of Dido's line in Marlowe's *Dido* see Hendricks (1992) 174–6.

92 Cf. Giusti (2026), also on the universalizing power of *semper*. It bears repeating that the term 'intersectionality' was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989).

such as Cleopatra and Sophonisba.[93] In particular, Haley reads Dido's 'passion' as "a cultural stereotype projected upon Africans by Romans and Greeks"[94] which, together with her threatening destructive drive and her stereotypical foreign seductiveness, makes her "foreshadow later stereotypes of women of color, particularly of black women".[95] Moreover, she interprets Dido's desire for motherhood not as a wicked Carthaginian desire for child slaughter but as an expression of African "matrifocality"[96] and suggests an African background for the rituals that she performs with the Massylian priestess.[97] In what follows, I take my cue from Haley in thinking about Dido as an African character, but I suggest that her 'Africanization' develops progressively through the course of Book 4, and that it is complicated by the fact that as a Phoenician settler Dido can be accused of racializing the indigenous Africans in turn, both in the *Aeneid* and in the tradition preserved by Justin.[98]

It should not be forgotten that Dido, a future model for Queen Elizabeth I, is a colonizer, and a rather violent one at that.[99] In Justin, we read of an otherwise unknown episode according to which she abducts eighty virgins from the island of Cyprus and gives them in marriage to Tyrian youths, in order to ensure an offspring for her future settlement (Just. 18.5.4–5). It could be that Cyprus in this account was at the time Phoenician territory, especially because Dido in the *Aeneid* refers to her father Belus' "devastation" of this "rich" island, which "he conquered and kept under his rule" (*genitor tum Belus opimam | vastabat Cyprum, et victor dicione tenebat*, *Aen*. 1.621–2).[100] The historical Dido follows in her father's footsteps in her ruthless plundering of Cyprus' human wealth,

93 See Haley (2009) and (2021). On Sophonisba see also Haley (1989) and (1990).
94 Haley (2009) 35.
95 Haley (2009) 40.
96 Haley (2009) 35–7.
97 Haley (2009) 35, 38–9.
98 The distinction between Dido and the Africans will be stressed in explicitly racist terms in early modern European renditions, where the latter become the Muslim Moors on the stage of colonialist Europe, on which see Ndiaye (2022). For specific instances, cf. e.g. Giovanni Battista Lalli's 1634 *L'Eneide travestita*, 4.128; Marlowe's *Dido* 4.4.62-3; and generally the readings by Hendricks (1992) and MacDonald (2002) 73–4.
99 On Dido's associations with Elizabeth see Cheney (1997) 99–114; Kallendorf (2007) 112–14.
100 Brent (2004) 145 reads Belus' plundering of an island sacred to Venus as a further hint of the enmity between (Argive) Carthaginians and Trojans (proto-Romans).

which allows her retrospectively to buttress Carthage's (Cypriot-) Phoenician pedigree, projecting the illusion that Carthaginians shared no blood with the indigenous Africans.

[73] Yet Justin's summary seems to suggest that there may have been an historical ambiguity in Trogus between, on the one hand, the plausible mixture of Phoenicians and Africans in the foundation of Carthage and, on the other, the projection of a city and people ethnically unrelated to local African communities. In one passage, we read that many of the neighbouring people came to Carthage for trading (Just. 18.5.10) and eventually settled there before the city's official foundation (*sedesque ibi statuentibus ex frequentia hominum velut instar civitatis effectum est*: "and then they decided to settle there, and so the gathering of people started to take the semblance of a state", Just. 18.5.11). And yet, in the episode of Dido turning down with her suicide the marriage proposal of a local African king (Just. 18.6), Trogus-Justin seems to rely on a clear-cut separation between the Carthaginians and the local Africans. The passage exacerbates differences between, and stereotypical portrayals of, both Punic and African people: both Dido and the Phoenicians who approach her "with Punic mind" or "guile" (*Punico ... ingenio*, Just. 18.6.1), are stigmatized as treacherous and deceitful, while the Africans are presented as 'uncultivated' or 'uncivilised', since the Phoenicians report that a certain African king is asking them for someone to teach him and his people "a more civilized way of life" (*cultiores victus*, Just. 18.2, which literally refers to cultivation, the measure of 'civilization' in antiquity), but that they cannot find anyone in the city who would wish to go among "barbarian people, who live like wild beasts" (*barbaros et ferarum more viventes*, Just. 18.6.3).

Virgil's *Aeneid* reflects this ambiguous tension between Phoenicians and local Africans, as well as Dido's ambiguous fluctuation between a Phoenician and an African identity, which we may even see at work when comparing the characterization of the local inhabitants in Justin with her wish to live "like a wild beast" (*more ferae*, *Aen*. 4.551).[101] We have seen that Dido and the Carthaginians were imagined to be naturally protective of their borders (*Aen*. 1.299–300);[102] it is because of Mercury's

101 On Dido's regressive and even "primitive" drive see Schiesaro (2005) 97–103.

102 Cf. the expulsion of drones from the beehive in the simile of *Aen*. 1.430–6, which is chock-full of military imagery, with Giusti (2014).

intervention that Dido treats the Trojans "with no discrimination" (*nullo discrimine*, *Aen*. 1.574), but there may instead be *discrimen* between the Tyrians and the local inhabitants from whom she has stolen the land with the trick of the oxhide. In her speech, Venus clearly differentiates the borders between Tyrians and 'Libyans', conflating different African people into a single bellicose "race" (*sed fines Libyci*, *genus intractabile bello*: "but the bordering land is Libyan, a race impossible to handle in war", 1.339).[103] Dido herself when talking to Ilioneus (1.616), refers to the Libyan shore as *immanes* ("monstrous", "frightful", "savage"), probably ascribing atrocity to the indigenous.[104]

[74] At the beginning of Book 4, Dido's sister Anna is keen to distinguish Carthage from its surroundings, but the similarities between her sister and the Africans become ironically obvious to the readers even as she speaks (*Aen*. 4.40–3):

> hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello, 40
> et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis;
> hinc deserta siti regio lateque furentes
> Barcaei.
>
> On this side the cities of the Gaetulians surround you, a race unconquerable in war, and the unbridled Numidians, and the inhospitable Syrtis; on this other, a waterless desert, and the Barcaei roam furiously on a vast tract of land.

In picturing themselves as isolated in the bastion of Carthage and surrounded by inimical nations, Anna echoes Venus' previous words (1.339), but she distinguishes between different African people. The "race unconquerable in war" is now that of the Gaetulians, joined in their hostility by Numidians and Barcaei, and by the hostile and desert landscape of Africa east and south-west of Carthage.[105] Anna's viewpoint here may be considered as in line with that of the Phoenicians as expressed in Justin. In the *Bellum Jugurthinum*, Sallust also pictured the Gaetulians as more warlike than the Libyans (*Libyes quam Gaetuli*

103 On how borders serve purposes of racialization, cf. Mbembe (2019).

104 See also Hesekamp (2021) 100; *contra* Austin (1971) 190 refers the adjective to the Carthaginians.

105 Hesekamp (2021) 92–3 speaks here of a "social gap" (*soziales Gefälle*) in Anna's perception of the locals as 'uncivilized' rather than racial difference.

minus bellicosi, *BJ* 18.12), just after specifying that both were "rough" and "uncivilized" (*Gaetuli et Libyes*, *asperi incultique*, *BJ* 18.1) insofar as they did not cultivate the land and lived off the meat of wild animals and fodder from the soil, while also having no laws, no customs, no authority and no settled homes. Just like Virgil, Sallust is at least presenting his description of the local Africans as originating from a Punic perspective, whether or not we believe his claim that this digression is based on the "Punic books" of King Hiempsal (*ex libris Punicis*, *qui regis Hiempsalis dicebantur*, *interpretatum nobis est*, *BJ* 17).[106]

Yet readers attentive to Virgil's dramatic irony will not fail to pick up on how the lines between Dido and the locals easily begin to blur. There seems to be an ironic slip in Anna's **[75]** application to the Numidians and the *Barcaei* of the same characteristics that will end up causing Dido's and Carthage's downfall: Anna's Numidians are "unbridled" (*infreni*, 4.41), technically because they practise bareback horse riding, but there may be a hint at their "unrestrained" sexuality,[107] while the *Barcaei* are specified as "widely furious" (*late ...furentes*, 4.42), an adjective ironically apt to describe Dido's irrational passion in *Aeneid* 4.[108] Anna pictures Dido as isolated in her territory, surrounded by hostile people, and the "deserts" of Libya (*deserta siti regio*, 4.42) that Aeneas also claimed to be roaming (*Libyae deserta peragro*, 1.384) resurface in Dido's unconscious representation of this land when she dreams of chasing her fellow Tyrians in a "desert land" (*Tyrios deserta quaerere terra*, 4.468).[109] The wasteland evoked in this dream also comments on her own situation, since she has previously described herself as "captured and deserted" (*capta ac deserta*, 4.330; *deserta*, 4.677): in her unconscious, Dido becomes one and the same with the feminized, colonizable, and malleable landscape of Virgil's Africa.

106 We should probably identify the king with Hiempsal II, king of Numidia between 80 and 60 BCE, although the Latin leaves it ambiguous whether the books were authored or possessed by him. Oniga (1995) 59–68 suggests that this would have been Hellenized rather than originally Punic scholarship.

107 Cf. Livy on Syphax' and Massinissa's lack of sexual restraint as a characteristic proper to all Numidians (29.23.4; 30.12.18), with Haley (1990) 375–81; Fabre-Serris (2021) 98–100; Hesekamp (2021) 91 n. 269.

108 See Haley (2009) 35.

109 See Hesekamp (2021) 73–4; 100–3 on the characters' perception of the deserted African space underscoring an "identity crisis".

There are other places in the poem that suggest that Carthage's borders may be as permeable to the local Africans as they are to Aeneas. Massylian cavalry guards Dido's palace before the hunt (4.132), and there may be good reason to believe that the court singer Iopas was a local African rather than a Phoenician. Servius tells us that Iopas was "an African king, one of Dido's suitors", invoking "Punic history" as his source (*Iopas vero rex Afrorum, unus de procis Didonis, ut Punica testatur historia*, Servius *ad Aen*. 1.738). He may be confusing Iopas with Iarbas,[110] but Alexander McKay has proposed an intriguing identification with Juba II (Greek Ἰόβας), the philosopher-king installed as king of Mauretania in around 23 BCE and especially interested, among other disciplines, in musicology.[111] For McKay, the allusion is flagged by Iopas' epithet *crinitus* at 1.740 (evoking the Latin Juba, used for the flowing mane of animals) and by an evocation of Juba's wife Cleopatra Selene, daughter of Mark Antony and Cleopatra, in the "wandering moon" of his song (*errantem lunam*, 1.742). Yet this is also a clear evocation of Dido, explicitly compared to the wandering moon at *Aen*. 6.452–4 (and to Diana, a moon goddess, at 1.498–504), and whose name 'Dido', according to Timaeus, was what the local Africans called her, because of her many "wanderings" (ὑπὸ τῶν Λιβύων διὰ τὴν πολλὴν αὐτῆς πλάνην Δειδὼ προσηγορεύθη ἐπιχωρίως, *BNJ* 566 F82). Whether or not the etymology of 'Dido' is Semitic in origin rather than **[76]** African,[112] it could be that Virgil himself believed Timaeus, since he has it alluded to by Iarbas, the only indigenous African who gets to speak in the *Aeneid*, when he refers to her as a "woman ... *wandering* in our territory" (*femina quae nostris errans in finibus*, 4.211).[113]

Anna may picture Carthage as an isolated bastion of Phoenician purity – tellingly so when she is stressing Dido's own faithfulness to her deceased Phoenician husband and diverting Dido's sex drive and fury onto the local Africans. Yet it would be entirely reasonable to imagine it as a city open for local populations to live and trade in, with a court open to the assiduous frequentations of local kings. If we follow Servius

110 Conington (1863) 103.
111 McKay (2004). On Juba II and Cleopatra Selene, see Roller (2003).
112 As argued by Honeyman (1947).
113 Cf also Venus' reference to "fleeing Dido" at 1.340–1 (*Dido... fugiens*), and Dido's wandering in the underworld at 6.450–1 (*Dido | errabat*).

and McKay in imagining Iopas as a local Numidian king, we may also wonder whether another historical allusion may be at work for Iarbas too, and if Virgil may be inviting his readers to think of historical African leaders attempting to control North African territory as lurking behind Dido's fictional suitors. This may be reflected in Virgil's specification of Iarbas as a Gaetulian (*Gaetulus Iarbas*, 4.326), which is not reported in any other source. Justin called him the leader of the "Maxitani" (Just. 18.6.1), quite certainly the *Muxitani* – that is, an historical African tribe whose name has been found in the Roman era in a suburb of Carthage, and must have been in control of the territory north of the Bagrada river.[114] Cato the Elder called him Iapon[115] and may have identified him with the king of the Zavecians or Zauekes, an ancient North African people who gave Libya the name of Zeugitana, and of whom we know little except that their women were chariot-drivers.[116] By making Iarbas a Gaetulian, Virgil may have had in mind a homonymous African prince Hiarbas who in the first century BCE led a revolt against the king of Numidia Hiempsal II, father of Juba I and grandfather of Juba II.[117]

Although Iarbas is referred to as a Gaetulian by Dido, the geographical co-ordinates of his scene in Book 4 show him instead as mixing elements of various African people. He is said to be the son of Jupiter Ammon and a Garamantian nymph (4.198), with the Garamantes being a Berber tribe that occupied today's Fezzan region, mentioned by Lucan as either sun-burned or black-skinned (*Garamante perusto*, Luc. 4.670); Lucan made them fight in the army of Juba I, and in the year of Virgil's death Cornelius Balbus (of Punic origin) celebrated a triumph over them in an expedition against Africa ordained by Augustus.[118] Yet [77] Iarbas also refers to his people as Maurusian = Mauretanian (*Maurusia ... gens*, 4.206–7), another dark-skinned population, as the name betrays (μαυρός, "dark"),[119] living instead on the west side of Africa, near the

114 Desanges (2010).
115 Quoted in Solinus Polyhistor 27.10.
116 Herodotus 4.193.
117 See Roller (2003) 26–7.
118 Herodotus already referred to the Garamantians as "a great nation" (ἔθνος μέγα, Herodotus 4.183; c£ 4.174-5). On Balbus' campaigns and triumph see Pliny, *NH* 5.35–7 with Desanges (1957). Virgil imagines the Romans' triumph over them at *Aen*. 6.794.
119 Lucan 4.678–9, *concolor Indo | Maurus*; cf. Manilius 4.729–30; Isidore, *Orig*. 14.5.10. Ovid makes Iarbas Maurusian (*maurus Iarba*, *Fast*. 3.552).

Atlantic Ocean.[120] Iarbas is thus pictured as king of a vast North African territory, spreading from the oracle of Jupiter Ammon (in the Oasis of Siwah, at the border between Egypt and Libya), through the territory of the Garamantes in Fezzan, up to the territory of the Mauretanians and the Atlantic Ocean.[121] Just like Aeneas', his *genus* too is *ab love summo* (1.380).

Virgil specifies that Iarbas is a son of rape (*rapta Garamantide nympha*, 4.198), and the placing of this detail at his very introduction may lend some credit to those critics who have seen him as characterized by a violent attitude against women in general, and against Dido in particular.[122] And yet this characterization of Iarbas as a "primitive, barbarian despot ... representative for other African chiefs"[123] does not stand the test of scrutiny. Yes, Dido refers to the Numidian kings (possibly including Iarbas) as "tyrants" (*tyranni*, 4.320), but so was her own brother (1.361).[124] It is true that Iarbas' use of *femina* (4.211) is contemptuous, and that it reduces Dido to her female and marriable status, denying her the leadership and role that she has achieved, but so was Venus' use of the term (1.364), and so will soon be Mercury's (4.570). Surprisingly for a character who is supposed to be characterized as 'primitive', Iarbas is engaged in quite sophisticated wordplay when he condescendingly says that he has provided Dido with a strip of land to cultivate (*litus arandum*, 4.212), which he deems worthless (playing on the expression *litus arare*, "wasting pains").[125] Iarbas is at most guilty of racializing the Trojans in turn, when describing "that Paris with his retinue of half men" (*ille Paris cum semiviro comitatu*, 4.215) according to proto-orientalist stereotypes, but there is little in the text to agree with Austin's statement that "fierce barbarian despot as he is, he regards Dido as a chattel, a woman to whose love he has a natural right; his attitude to Jupiter is childlike and naïve, and Virgil has drawn a subtle picture of

120 DServ. *ad Aen*. 4.206.

121 Cf. the list of people Iarbas reigns over in Silius (*Pun*. 2.56–64).

122 See Hesekamp (2021) 94–6 following Austin (1955). Cf. Pease (1935) 225 on Iarbas and Turnus, "each a person of vigorous, not to say violent, disposition".

123 Hesekamp (2021) 96, "das Bild eines primitiven, barbarischen Despoten ... repräsentativ für die übrigen afrikanischen Stammesfürsten"; see also 91 n. 269 with Sallust, *BJ* 80 on Numidians and Moors holding women of little value.

124 Austin (1955) 102 takes it merely as "rulers" and believes that Iarbas is meant. For Hesekamp (2021) 93 the word is evocative of brutality and violence.

125 Pease (1935) 229–30; Austin (1955) 77; Hesekamp (2021) 95 n. 278.

primitive mentality".[126] As often happens with Greco-Roman texts, **[78]** the expectations of the modern scholar racialize the ancient character more than the text actually does.

I have argued that in Book 4 Dido seems to progressively mingle with the local Africans, despite instances where the text also suggests the non-permeability of Carthage's borders. There is a final portion of the poem that I believe elucidates Dido's progressive Africanization, while also maintaining an ambiguity in showing Dido's resistance to this very process. This is the double scene where Dido narrates to Anna her encounter with a Massylian priestess (*Aen*. 4.478–98) and goes on to perform the rites that the priestess supposedly instructs (4.504–21). In accordance with her reading of Dido as an African character, Haley argues for an African origin of these rituals, which makes them "familiar and comforting to Dido", against their common interpretation as highlighting her "deepening descent into madness and irrationality".[127] Here, I am less interested in probing any actual Africanness of these rituals than I am in thinking about how this episode epitomizes the multifocal and multidirectional ways in which racialization functions for and against Dido in the poem. On the one hand, we may argue that Dido attempts to racialize the indigenous priestess and thus divert onto her the witchcraft and irrationality that she is engaging with, just as we have seen Anna attempting to divert Dido's unrestrained lust and fury away onto the Numidians and the *Barcaei*. On the other hand, the final effect that the text would have on its Roman readers is a racialization of Dido herself as a type of barbarian witch, a racialization which is of course inseparable from the poem's misogynistic discourse.

The geography of the scene is interesting in thinking about both Carthage and Dido as merging with Africa at this point in the poem. When attempting to make Anna accept the idea that she has decided to approach magic rituals to keep Aeneas at her side, Dido takes her sister through a tortuous ecphrasis to the very edges of Africa and the known world, further and below Mauretania, where the territory of the Western Ethiopians meets the Atlantic Ocean (4.480–2). This is a land that the Romans will transform into a desert for their imagination of the marvellous, and that the Elder Pliny will populate with one-eyed, dog-

126 Austin (1955) 75.
127 Haley (2009) 38.

headed, or four-legged people (*NH* 6.195).[128] From here came a priestess who was somehow introduced to Dido, although Dido is extremely reticent in telling Anna how this came about, claiming only that she "was shown" to her (*hinc mihi Massylae gentis monstrata sacerdos*, 4.483). Dido specifies that the priestess is Massylian, which means that she originally came not from the land of the Ethiopians but from the east of Numidia, at the very borders of Carthage, but at the time of this introduction she had just returned **[79]** from western Ethiopia, where she used to guard the temple of the Hesperides and feed the serpent who in turn guarded the golden apples (4.484–5). Dido makes it clear to Anna that she is going to engage in magic against her will (*magicas invitam accingier artis*, 4.493), casting full responsibility onto this priestess (*monstratque sacerdos*: "it is the priestess who advises me", 4.498).

There is at least one inconsistency in the background story that Dido tells us about this priestess. This is the curious detail that the priestess sprinkles "narcotic poppy" (*soporiferum ... papaver*, 4.486), when surely her task should have been to keep the serpent awake in his guard.[129] Dido seems here to evoke two different episodes from Apollonius' *Argonautica*: Hercules' killing of the serpent guarding the golden apples, which the Argonauts learn *post factum* (*Arg*. 4.1393–460), and Medea lulling to sleep the dragon guarding the golden fleece (*Arg*. 4.156–61). If this priestess had any responsibility in the demise of this serpent, then it is telling that she appears to combine two characters who comment on different aspects of Dido: Hercules as proto-colonizer of Africa, and Medea as scorned lover and potentially threatening barbarian sorceress. Indeed, Dido's ambiguous identification with the priestess becomes explicit during the actual rites, where the passage from the *regina* setting up the pyre (*at regina...*, 4.504) to the dishevelled priestess invoking the infernal gods (*crinis effusa sacerdos | ter centum tonat ore deos*, 4.509–10) and then back to Dido herself carrying the mola to the altars (*ipsa mola manibusque piis altaria iuxta...*, 4.517) does not necessarily imply a change of subject. Virgil's placing of the *sacerdos* as surrounded by the "altars" (*stant arae circum*, 4.509) and his later representation of Dido as "next

128 On this tradition see especially Evans (1999); Mudimbe (1988) 70–1 sees a continuity between Pliny's (and others') "geography of monstrosity" and later European ideas of Africa.

129 See already Servius *ad loc.*; Pease (1935) 396–8; Austin (1955) 144–5.

to the altars" (*altaria iuxta*, 4.517) further underscores the identification between the two, with the effect that the reader will wonder whether "the priestess" at line 509 may in fact be none other than Dido herself "as priestess". The half line that hangs in between the two figures (*et matri praereptus amor*: "and the love snatched away from the mother", 4.516, a reference to the *hippomanes*) speaks to Dido as a painful reminder of her failed motherhood and of her failure to play an active genetic role in the Carthaginian line – which is, as Mairead McAuley has emphasized, a great part of the tragedy of *infelix Dido*, with *infelix* standing for her as "sterile" and "unfruitful".[130] Whether, and how, the Carthaginian line will mix with the Africans rather than with the Trojans, Virgil never explicitly says: Dido dies childless, and the line of the Carthaginians springs from death in a sort of necromancy, with Hannibal invoked as a vindictive tragic demon, asked to rise from her bones (*exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*, 4.625) in order to exact vengeance from the "entire future offspring and race" **[80]** (*stirpem et genus omne futurum*, 4.622) that she wished had been hers.[131] Filling in this gap left by the *Aeneid*, both Ovid (*Fast*. 3.551–2) and Silius (*Pun*. 854–6) will explicitly claim that Iarbas and the Numidians chase the kingdom after Dido's death. In superimposing Dido with this autochthonous African priestess, Virgil seems to hint at this future history of Dido's originally Argive line.

To conclude, the scene of Dido as Massylian priestess conveys the hybridity of Dido as both racialized and racializing subject: it condenses her Punic-African racialization and the ambiguous ethnic status of her city, while also reminding us of her own attempts to divert her irrationality onto the indigenous inhabitants. That these attempts have at least deceived her modern critics, if not her sister, may be evidenced by Austin's reading of the scene, when he comments that "in contrast with ... the witch and her horrid mumbo-jumbo, Dido seems calm and collected".[132] The scene stages racecraft and witchcraft as processes of irrational and intimate imagination, able to bring about real-life consequences both in the poem and in the world. To quote the Fields sisters, they are both "imagined, acted upon, and re-imagined, the action

130 McAuley (2016) 60. On the *hippomanes* see Starnone (2021b) with bibliography.
131 Cf. Giusti (2018) 232.
132 Austin (1955) 155.

and imagining inextricably intertwined".[133] It is up to us to try in turn to imagine racecraft "outside or beyond the belief" as "a thing in itself worth scrutiny" in its formation.[134] To close with a caveat that they direct at contemporary Western societies, "it is impossible to understand what 'post-racial' might be without first understanding more profoundly than we do at present just what 'racial' is".[135] The same, we may add, holds true for the 'pre-' or 'proto-racial' in the study of the ancient world.

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133 Fields and Fields (2012) 19.
134 Fields and Fields (2012) 20.
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Fig. 26: Quintus Ennius, from Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum* ('Book of Chronicles') workshop of Michel Wolgemut (1493). Rijksmuseum. Object Number: RP-P–2016–49–21–16 (cropped). Public Domain, https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200638147

Chapter 10: Virgil vs. Ennius, or: The Undoing of the Annalist

Ingo Gildenhard

1. Introduction[1]

The figure of the father is a time-worn trope in literary history.[2] The metaphor of paternity implies respect for the primacy of origins and the authority of age, and the notion of descent captures the debt that writers – *nolentes volentes* – owe to tradition, understood as the literary patrimony they inherit from their predecessors. But already Homer knew that Telemachus could have strung the bow, and in our times the quest of the latecomer to upstage the firstling (or even take his place) has received proper theoretical recognition as Freudian critics, notably Harold Bloom and Francesco Orlando, have developed an analytic idiom for exploring the Oedipal dynamics which often underwrite the relationship of poets to their forebears.[3] Roman literature has proved particularly fertile for investigations of this kind: many a Latin text can be shown to feature a

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1 I presented versions of, and profited from feedback on, the part on Ennius in London (2002), Salerno (2003) and Oxford (2003) and the part on Virgil in Cologne (2000) and Halle/ Saale (2002). For the invitations, I am grateful to Giovanni Casadio, Ed Bispham, Wolfram Ax and Bernd Manuwald, and Egon Flaig. The Cambridge conference offered the perfect opportunity to bring the two halves together and I am much indebted to William Fitzgerald and Emily Gowers for the invitation.

2 See Kofler (2003) 81–2 for examples.

3 Bloom (1973); Orlando (1978).

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parricidal poetics that castrates and cannibalizes predecessors, testifying to the struggle of the writer to extricate himself from *patria potestas* (an ancient Roman variant, so it would seem, of the anxiety of influence) and establish himself as an author *sui iuris*, worthy of, or indeed surpassing, his ancestors.[4] At times, these dynamics are far more lurid and gut-wrenching than the standard terms used to describe them (viz. *imitatio* and *emulatio*) would have led one to suppose.[5] Such Freudian readings have some affinity with the epistemological dogma which holds that efforts to interpret an author in his own context are 'always already' compromised, or even doomed to outright failure, since his successors will inevitably condition the way he is understood. [**74**] In this scheme of things, a non-Virgilized reading of Homer or a reading of Virgil uninfluenced by, say, Dante are impossible. As the direction of influence gets at least partly inverted, it is the last author, not the first, who determines the overall outlook of tradition, redefining the position, meaning and value of his predecessors when taking up his place within it.[6]

Studies in the Freudian dimension of intertextuality and reflections on the historical contingency of literary hermeneutics thus coincide in foregrounding the power of the son, and both could point, by way of example, to Virgil's undoing of 'father Ennius'. If Dante had to do with consigning Virgil to Hell, Virgil achieved something far more radical. He, too, via programmatic allusions, situates his literary forebear in the realm of the dead.[7] But he also catapulted Ennius out of the canon. The impact of the *Aeneid* was such that the *Annals*, once *the* epic of Rome, all but disappeared into fragmentary oblivion, reduced to some 400+ pieces of disfigured flotsam drifting along in the margins of mainstream tradition. In part as a result of Virgil's success, Ennius, whose name

4 *Pace* Walde (2001) 215 who declares antiquity a zone free from the anxiety of influence. Contrast Kerkhecker (2001) 79 who points out that Cicero (at *Brut*. 76) offers a proto-Bloomian reading of Ennius, *qui a Naeuio uel sumpsisti multa, si fateris, uel, si negas, surripuisti*. For a balanced discussion of the 'limited applicability' as well as the heuristic potential of Bloom's notion to ancient literature see Finkelpearl (1998) 15–16, further Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002) with Halliwell (2006).

5 Exquisite food for thought on literary relationships is now on offer in Rimell (2002) (on Petronius) and Schiesaro (2003) (on Seneca). Hardie (1993) remains fundamental for the epic tradition.

6 See Eliot (1975) and Gadamer (1972) for the theory and Martindale (1993) for an attempt to render their ideas useful for the study of Latin poetry.

7 See Hardie (1986) 69–83, (1993) 103–5, (1998) 53–4, Kofler (2003) 75–93 and Casali (2007); further Most (1992) for the Homeric model.

Lucretius, Horace and Ovid once construed as etymologically related to literary immortality, dwindled to a spectre in western literature, revolutionary and figurehead though he might initially have been.[8] Ironically, he even owes some of his fragmented survival partly to learned paratexts that accumulated around Virgil's *oeuvre*. To add insult to injury, Virgil has come to play a major role in how Ennius and his literary achievements are perceived (which frequently means: belittled). Deriving their aesthetic norms from Virgil's poetry, many critics assign to Ennius (as well as other writers of the 'archaic' period) the role of imperfect predecessors of Augustan classicism.[9] Virgil, then, managed to do what many authors desire but few achieve – the perfect parricide, where the corpse is not just buried in a literary underworld but disappears, and the son lives on, at the centre of a culture and occupying the final stage in a teleological process.

The destruction wrought by the forces of tradition can never be fully undone. But from early modern times onwards, an enterprise in many respects diametrically opposed to the selectivity and forgetfulness built into the canon has gathered momentum: science. To the scientist, the values of received opinion do not matter. His quest for knowledge encompasses everything, including material that earlier ages reduced to debris. Ennius benefited immensely from the untraditional attention he in due course attracted. To begin with, he got his own editions. A series of 'knights without fear'[10] embarked upon the thorny business of collecting the *disiecti membra poetae* (to [**75**] use Horace's prescient formulation), from Hieronymus Columna, whose edition appeared in 1590, to Otto Skutsch.[11] Likewise, historicizing scholars have been hard at work to regain for Ennius his original, pre-Virgilian meaning.[12] Most recently, Stephen Hinds, benignly ignoring the inconsequentialities of the 'Always Alreadies' (though without returning to the epistemological

8 Lucr. *DRN* 1.117–19, Hor. *Carm*. 3.30.1 (as well as *Carm*. 4.8.12–22), Ov. *Met*. 15.875–6.

9 See e.g. the *Aeneid* commentaries by Austin *passim*.

10 See Usener (1882) 28: 'Ein rechter Philologe muß ein Ritter ohne Furcht sein: er darf keiner Frage ausweichen ...' with Marchand (2003) 134. For the habit of collecting fragments see more generally the papers in Most (1997).

11 The effort continues: see Flores (2000) and Flores et al. (2002).

12 On historicization see the papers in Most (2001) and Gildenhard (2003b) on its relation to science. Edmunds (2005) identifies 'work on the interface of formalism and historicism' (11) as one of the two main trends in current Latin studies (the other being reception).

naivete of earlier generations), has offered a deft analysis of Ennius' view of his place within literary history well appreciated by Denis Feeney: 'Hinds's fundamental point, once apprehended, can never be forgotten: Ennius did not know that he was "archaic"...'[13]

Such efforts to historicize tend to pay a double dividend. Apart from improving our sense of what an author tried to do in writing what he wrote (to use the idiom of speech-act theory) they frequently aid in understanding the agenda of his successors as well.[14] In the present paper I want to explore this heuristic possibility by comparing Ennius' *Annals* and Virgil's *Aeneid* with respect to authorial self-fashioning, political culture, views of the supernatural and the relation between literary format and conception of history. As goes without saying, a thorough exploration of these issues in either author would run to monographic length. Still, I hope that the sketchy nature of what follows does not entirely compromise the aims of the exercise: to throw the historical specificity of both authors into sharper relief, and to show that Virgil's dialogue with Ennius goes far beyond literary form, learned allusions and issues in aesthetics.

2. Ennius

a. Authorial self-fashioning[15]

Three facets of Ennius' composite authorial *persona* tend to get the lion's share of attention: his dream-encounter with Homer in the proem to the *Annals* as well as his polemics against Naevius and his apparent endorsement of Alexandrian sophistication in the proem to Book 7. Studies of the relevant fragments are legion. Most focus on the philological puzzle of reconstructing a meaningful whole out of the surviving bits and on how Ennius defined his place within the Greek and Roman *literary* [**76**] traditions.[16] Less well studied are those aspects

13 Hinds (1998) 52–98, esp. 55; Feeney (2005) 227.

14 See Skinner in Tully (1988) for the theory. Hinds (1998) 52–6 (on Ennius and Virgil's claims to be the first to bring the Muses to Italy) is a case in point.

15 For the concept of the authorial *persona* see e.g. Mayer (2003), Volk (2005) and Wittchow (2005). The most thorough study of Ennius' 'Selbstdarstellung' remains Suerbaum (1968); for Virgil see Suerbaum (1999) 357–84.

16 Bibliography on the dream encounter with Homer includes Mariotti (1951 /1991)

of his authorial self-fashioning by which he assigns to himself a place in Roman society, although one and the same facet of Ennius' *persona* may have socio-political or cultural, as well as literary, significance. Thus his self-labelling as *poeta* implies a refusal to arrogate for himself the religious (and hence political) authority associated with the term he rejects, *prima facie* on aesthetic grounds, viz. *uates*.[17] The same is true of his choice of the hexameter (rather than the Saturnian).[18] And recently, Emma Dench has read Ennius' declaration to be gifted with 'three hearts' (corresponding to his knowledge of Greek, Oscan, and Latin) as 'an embodiment of the kind of cultural bricolage' that is in evidence in the archaeological record of second-century Italy.[19]

Most significantly, perhaps, the assertion to be Homer reincarnate situates Ennius within the memorial culture of the Roman nobility, through his supreme command of a Greek medium of immortality: epic poetry with an epinician touch.[20] This aspect is well appreciated by an

41–62, Suerbaum (1968) 46–113, Brink (1972), Reggiani (1979) (with Jocelyn (1981)), Skutsch (1985) 142–69, Aicher (1989), Livrea (1990), (1996), (1998), Dominik (1993) 38–41 and Walde (2001) 211–18. For Ennius as a Hellenistic poet and his polemics against Naevius see e.g. Ziegler (1966), Newman (1967a) 64-77, Suerbaum (1968) 249–95, Wülfing-von Martitz (1972), Skutsch (1985) 366–78, Farrell (1991) 299, Hutchinson (1988) 278–9, Dominik (1993) 42–3, Cameron (1995), Hinds (1998) 52–74 and Kerkhecker (2001). 'Hellenistic' is not necessarily synonymous with 'Alexandrian' or 'Callimachean'. Cf. the sobering assessment of Ennius' Alexandrian affiliations by Feeney (1991) 120–3, Goldberg (1995) 90–2 and Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002) 534. See further (on both proems) the entries in Suerbaum (2003) 233–4.

17 See briefly Gildenhard (2003a) 103-4. Hardie (2007) rightly stresses that Ennius employs political imagery (especially that of the triumph) to underscore the magnificence of his achievement (co-opting the Greek hexameter, scaling the mountain of the Muses and domesticating the goddesses of poetry at Rome). There is indeed nothing modest about Ennius' self-representation as a poet. I would insist, however, that Ennius, either as author in the text or as the author of the text, is very careful about how he situates himself in the field of power.

18 See Meyer (2004) 54 on the special religious and political qualities associated with Saturnian verse.

19 Dench (2005) 168. See also 326, where she links Ennius' *tria corda* with his (autobiographical?) statement that 'we are Romans who were once Rudini' (*Ann.* 524), noting how '"becoming" and "being" Roman coexists with multiple "local" cultural identities'. (Skutsch prints the *tria corda* notice preserved by Gellius (*N.A.* 17.17.1) under *operis incerti fragmenta*. Contrast Suerbaum (1968) 140–1 who argues that it belongs to the epilogue of the *Annals*.) In this context see also Barchiesi (1995) who proposes on the basis of admittedly circumstantial evidence that somewhere in the *Annals* Ennius construed, or hinted at, an illustrious local lineage for himself, involving the king Messapus.

20 For the epinician elements of the *Annals* see Sheets (1983).

anonymous epigram on Ennius as well as by Cicero who cites it with illuminating commentary (Cic. *Tusc*. 1.34):[21]

> loquor de principibus; quid? poetae nonne post mortem nobilitari uolunt? unde ergo illud:
>
> 'aspicite, o ciues, senis Enni imaginis formam:
> hic uestrum panxit maxima facta patrum'?
>
> mercedem gloriae flagitat ab iis, quorum patres adfecerat gloria. [**77**]
>
> I am speaking of political leaders. But do not poets also wish to be elevated to noble status after their death? How else would one explain the following: 'Gaze, fellow-citizens, on the features of the image of aged Ennius: he composed (a poem about) the mighty deeds of your ancestors'? He insists on being given a recompense of glory from those whose ancestors he had endowed with glory.

The inscription was attached to a bust or statue (*imago*) of Ennius on display in a public space of the city of Rome, or, rather, this is what the distich presupposes.[22] If Greek epigrams tend to apostrophize the stranger who walks by (ξεῖνε), the one for Ennius addresses a collectivity: the members of the poet's adopted community. In the address *o ciues* the author has thus given a striking Roman spin to a Greek convention.[23] As Suerbaum notes, this stance is anomalous.[24] It is, however, not unique. Two of the Scipionic epitaphs furnish interesting precedents.[25] The inscription for Cornelius Scipio Barbatus (*cos*. 298) reminds the Romans that the deceased was aedile, consul and censor *apud uos*, and the same claim can most likely be restored in the inscription for his son,

21 Whether or not the epigram was composed by Ennius himself (a rather unlikely proposition) does not particularly matter. For balanced discussions *pro* and *contra* see Suerbaum (1968) 210–14 and Courtney (1993) 42–3.

22 It is unlikely that the epigram had anything to do with the statue of Ennius that was supposedly on display in the family grave of the Scipios. See Courtney (1993) 42–3.

23 See Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002) 389–481 for the Greek background.

24 Suerbaum (1968) 333. See also 208–9.

25 My analysis of the epigram here is much indebted to Morelli (2000) 11–64 ('Gli elogia del sepolcro degli Scipioni e l'epigramma enniano'), which should be consulted for a more substantial and detailed analysis. (I owe knowledge of this monograph to the generosity of Frederik Brenk.)

L. Cornelius Scipio (*cos*. 259): *consol*, *censor*, *aidilis hic fuit a*[*pud uos*].[26] The epigram thereby situates Ennius within the Roman economy of fame by exhorting the Roman citizens to reward the poet with the same recognition usually reserved for former magistrates – not because of his deeds but their epic representation. The elliptical construction *pangere facta*, by tweaking the expected idiom (*carmen pangere de aliqua re*), slyly conflates the doing of deeds with their remembrance in epic. In effect the epigram says that with his *Annals* Ennius achieved something analogous to the heroic feats of Roman nobles for which he should receive the broad recognition of his *imago* by the citizens just as an aristocrat would who had served the commonwealth well.[27] It thus sets up a triangular relationship between *poeta*, *ciues* and *patres*, in which both the heroics of the aristocracy and their immortalization in epic verse take place in the context, and for the benefit, of the larger civic community.

Intriguingly, it is just possible to detect a similar constellation at the beginning of the *Annals*. Scholars by and large concur that somewhere in the proem Ennius high-[**78**]lighted a reciprocity between his subject matter (the *res gestae* of the Romans) and his medium (epic poetry), their respective distinction ensuring widespread and ever-lasting fame for the poet and his protagonists – a time-worn topos of epic and epinician verse, from Homer and Pindar onwards, here used to justify the author's 'right to speak' on Roman history, a privilege usually reserved to members of the ruling élite.[28] And after the dream, he included a direct address to

26 See *ILLRP* 309 = *ILS* 1 and *ILLRP* 310 = *ILS* 2 & 3. Intriguingly, the epitaphs of the family losers, i.e. those who did not live up to the standards set by the ancestors, construct a different relation between the voice of the epigram, the audience and the deceased. See further Coarelli (1972), Eck (1981), van Sickle (1984), (1987), (1988), Wachter (1987), Courtney (1995), Flower (1996) and Morelli (2000).

27 Statues (*imagines*) were of special importance in the memorial culture of the Roman nobility: see Sehlmeyer (1999). The author of the epigram may also have thought of the wax masks (*imagines*) that were awarded to former office holders upon their death. See Flaig (1995a), (2001), (2003a) 49–50 and Flower (1996). Cicero certainly does, as is implied by his formulation *post mortem* <u>*nobilitari*</u>.

28 See *Ann*. 12–13 *latos <per> populos res atque poemata nostra | ... clara> cluebunt*. The lines come with serious textual difficulties. For *cluebunt* (rather than the transmitted *cluebant*) see Zwierlein (1982) and Skutsch (1985) 168–9. Skutsch rightly has sympathy for Ilberg's conjecture *terrasque* (for *res atque*): while the poetry is clearly marked as that of Ennius (*poemata nostra*), the deeds (*res*) remain strangely unqualified. Skutsch places the fragment after the dream-encounter with Homer, but there is something to be said for inserting it right after the invocation to the Muses. See Flores et al. (2002) 26. For the reciprocity of epic song and heroic deed

the citizens of Rome, which would seem to suggest that he wished his bestowal of epic immortality to take place within a wider civic context – much as the epigram, which, it now appears, plays off this aspect of Ennius' voice. To those who read the *Annals* with Skutsch, this point will not be obvious: he relegates the decisive fragment to the limbo-section *operis incerti fragmenta annalibus fortasse tribuenda*, believing that it should be assigned to the *Satires*. But Walter Kißel has recently shown that the fragment, which is quoted and transmitted with comment by Persius, and is explicitly assigned to the *Annals* by the *scholia*, does indeed belong to the epic (Pers. 6.9–11; Ennius, *Ann*. fr. 16 V = *op*. *inc*. 1 Sk.):

> 'Lunai portum, est operae, cognoscite, ciues'
> cor iubet hoc Enni, postquam destertuit esse
> Maeonides Quintus pauone ex Pythagoreo.
>
> 'Fellow-citizens, get to know (it is worth the effort) the harbour of Luna' – this the heart of Ennius orders, right after he has stopped snoring the dream that he is Quintus Homerus, out of the Pythagorean peacock.

Apart from the *scholia* to Persius, Kißel's clinching insight is the identification of the 'port of Luna'. In Ennius, the phrase does not refer to the Ligurian town of that name (as it does in Persius), but to the place above the moon where Pythagorean souls are said to gather awaiting their reincarnation.[29] Kißel further illustrates that Persius' comments on the verse indicate where precisely in the *Annals* the line occurred, namely right after Ennius finished recounting his Homeric-Pythagorean dream.[30]

The poet's decision to turn the civic collective into his imaginary audience is ingenious – in particular if one considers possible alternatives.[31] Ennius could have [**79**] followed Homer in staging a dialogue with the Muses, whom he addresses in the first line of the

in the Greek tradition see e.g. Goldhill (1991) 119.

29 See Kißel (1990) 776–87. Cf. Suerbaum (1968) 50–4, who also attributes the verse to the proem of the *Annals*, but identifies the *Lunai portum* with the harbour-town in Liguria; further 140 on Persius' use of *cor*.

30 See Kißel (1990) 783–4 on the precise meaning of *destertere* ('mit Schnarchen aufhören').

31 I say 'imaginary' since I consider the ruling élite Ennius' primary actual audience. But cf. Suet. *Gram*. 2.2 (the grammarian Q. Vargunteius holding public recitations of Ennius' *Annals*).

epic; but that would have meant losing the tight interface between text and context achieved by his apostrophe of the Roman citizens.[32] He could have addressed one of his aristocratic friends, as Lucretius would later do, such as Fulvius Nobilior. This option, however, would have diminished the poem's appeal for a wider audience and hence also (a crucial point) for his patron. Or he could have addressed the senatorial collective (*patres*); but that would have deprived the *Annals* of the civic context in which the memorial practices of the ruling elite took place, which presupposed not just other aristocrats but the entire *populus* as audience.[33] By addressing the citizens, Ennius models his authorial voice on that of an aristocratic speaker who addresses the people – in an assembly or, an even closer parallel, during the delivery of a *laudatio funebris* in the forum.[34] In contrast to such *laudationes*, however, which always focused on the achievements of one *gens* only, the *Annals* featured the deeds of all families who contributed to the success story of their *res publica*.[35] Ennius thus turns himself into a 'master of memory' who assumes the proud position of a Homeric *poeta* in the wider context of the civic community of which he recently became a member.[36]

b. The *Annals* and the political culture of the Roman republic[37]

Ennius' self-promotion as Homer incarnate should not obfuscate profound differences between his *Annals* and the Homeric epics.[38] Quite

32 The new Simonides makes one wonder whether Ennius had access to earlier Greek experimentation with the Homeric model for the celebration of historical feats. See Stehle (2001) 106–7 for Simonides' appropriation and deviation from the Homeric model in creating his role as performer.

33 The people (in the role as voters) of course constituted the facts to be remembered in the first place: the names of magistrates, their offices and deeds. In their capacity as arbiters of aristocratic competition, they were an important audience of aristocratic self-promotion. See Hölkeskamp (2004b) 85–8.

34 For the Roman orator and his performance context see Millar (1984), (1986), (1989), (1998), Hölkeskamp (1995), Jehne (2000), Mouritsen (2001), and Morstein-Marx (2004) (with the review by Mouritsen (2005)).

35 For further differences between Ennius' medium of immortality and the media practised by the Roman aristocracy see Gildenhard (2003a) 104–6.

36 For the phrase 'master of memory' see LeGoff (1992) 54. An element worth exploring in a different context is the didacticism of the imperative *cognoscite*: Ennius exhorts his audience to get to know the nature of the universe, much as his admirer Lucretius would do.

37 For the concept of 'political culture' see Hölkeskamp (2004a) and (2004b) with further bibliography.

38 For a helpful outline of (some of) the similarities and differences between Homer

apart from their title and formal outlook, the *Annals* depict a socio-political universe in many respects utterly un-Homeric. Even if the epic celebrates Roman nobles in Homeric terms (a hallmark of the *Annals* foregrounded already by ancient readers, such as the author of the epigram [**80**] discussed above, Cicero or Silius Italicus),[39] the heroes of the *Annals* tend to have values and priorities rather distinct from those of their Homeric counterparts. Thus one Roman noble gains ever-increasing glory by pursuing the unheroic strategy of procrastination, ignoring hearsay in the interest of public welfare.[40] Others sacrifice their lives to secure victory for the *res publica*, surely the ultimate manifestation of a 'communal' type of heroism.[41] And commanders worry about their men.[42] This should not be taken to imply that all protagonists in the *Annals* were whitewashed paragons. For instance, the refusal to proceed to battle because of fear that it would result in a disaster for the legions is most likely addressed by Aemilius Paullus to his 'impetuous colleague' Terentius Varro.[43] Ennius does not, or at least not entirely, take the drama and tussles out of Roman history (as some scholars would have it);[44] but this does not diminish his appreciative representation of the civic values of Rome's aristocracy. Furthermore, several fragments suggest that Ennius did not just celebrate the exploits of the ruling élite; rather, the *Annals* contain the success story of a civic community, in which aristocrats and common soldiers excelled in equal measures. The Roman generals achieved their deeds not only by bringing along a cook (as Brecht supposes for Caesar when he conquered Gaul), but

and Ennius see Dominik (1993) 44. Some recent scholarship prefers to downplay differences between Greece and Rome, in part as a reaction to a long-standing discourse that took the cultural superiority of Greece for granted. Feeney (2005) exposes the slogan 'Rome was just like Greece' as a new and self-defeating form of crypto-Hellenocentrism. See further Martin (1979), (1994), (1997), Flaig (1993).

39 Cic. *Arch*. 22, Sil. *Pun*. 12.410–11.

40 *Ann*. 363-5 (the famous elogium of Fabius Maximus Cunctator).

41 *Ann*. 191-4 (the *devotio* of one of the Decii – see the section on religion for a more extensive discussion).

42 *Ann*. 262 *certare abnueo*, *metuo legionibus labem*. The theme is not entirely absent from the *Iliad* of course. Apart from *Il*. 1.117 (Agamemnon), concern for his fellow Greeks is one of the arguments by which Odysseus tries to persuade Achilles to resume fighting in *Iliad* 9. But Agamemnon subordinates the well-being of the army to his honour and Achilles, in his reply, tellingly ignores this aspect of Odysseus' discourse. See further Taplin (1990).

43 See Skutsch (1985) 440–2.

44 See e.g. Jocelyn (1972) 1007–8 and Dominik (1993) 51.

junior officers and a citizen-army as well as extensive auxiliary troops.[45] The fragments that bear out this point are unexciting, apart from being mostly *sedis incertae*.[46] Still, they convey a valuable insight into the ethos of the narrative. And in some places, we can still capture a contrast between the civic army of the Romans and the Greek emphasis on a single hero.[47]

The pendant to *induperator* and *legiones* in warfare (*militiae*) are political procedures and institutions at home (*domi*). Throughout the *Annals* Ennius is keen to stress that Roman society formed a civic community, grounded in citizenship and held together by a distinct political culture. This of course involved public offices, which are mentioned repeatedly in the fragments, but also a tight network of communal norms and values. Tellingly, the genuinely republican emphasis is already manifest in the part of the narrative covering the royal period. In his account of the contest between Romulus and Remus over the ownership of the city Ennius includes a simile that [**81**] features a consul at the games.[48] And Romulus addresses the people after the settlement between him and Titus Tatius in their constitutional capacity (*Ann*. 102–3):

> quod mihi reique fidei regno uobisque, Quirites,
> se fortunatim feliciter ac bene uortat
>
> May this turn out prosperously, successfully and well for me, the commonwealth, the trust put in us, our kingdom and you, Quirites.

The term *Quirites* recalls the Sabine town of Cures and thus acknowledges the Sabine element in the Roman population, but it also came to refer to the citizens of Rome collectively in their peacetime functions, especially in solemn addresses and appeals.[49] By juxtaposing *regnum* and *fides*, a

45 'Junior officers': Jocelyn (1972) 1021, Dominik (1993) 44; auxiliary troops: *Ann*. 229.
46 See *Ann*. 499, 550, 559, 563, 577.
47 See *Ann*. 167 *aio te Aeacida Romanos uincere posse*. Cf. *Ann*. 197 *stolidum genus Aeacidarum*. See further Jocelyn (1972) 1008: 'the role of the *populus Romanus* in the great events described received a heavy emphasis.' The reference to Cic. *Arch*. 22 (n. 200), however, is unhelpful in this connection.
48 See *Ann*. 72–83, esp. 78–82; further Jocelyn (1972) 1007 who stresses the continuity in republican civil institutions and social behaviour between the first three books, which covered the royal period, and the latter part of the epic.
49 See Leovant-Cirefice (2000).

key Roman concept, Ennius underscores that from the start the Roman citizens and their leaders were bound together by reciprocal bonds of trust and respect.[50] Non-Roman potentates in the *Annals* tend to be less civic-minded than Romulus, as evinced by Romulus' outcry in response to the news of Tatius' demise: *O Tite, tute, Tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti* 'Tyrant Titus Tatius, you brought such great evils upon yourself!' (*Ann.* 104). In the republican section of the *Annals*, the conduct of Geminus Servilius was most likely representative of how Ennius depicted Roman aristocrats discharging their responsibilities.[51] His appreciation of the civic culture of republican Rome further manifests itself in verses that celebrate the *orator* and *sapientia* – at times in contrast to the stupidity of foreign foes[52] – or the epic recognition he granted to the reconciliation between Fulvius Nobilior and Lepidus in Book 15. Other fragments from the narrative proper bear out Ennius' interest in the legal status of the citizen. Two fragments, one of which is often considered autobiographical, link the spread of Rome's military might to the extension of Roman citizenship, though Ennius probably glossed over the complicating factor of *suffragium*.[53]

Civic status is not the only scheme by which Ennius defines the Romans. The *Annals* also contain markers of cultural identity, involving language, religion, and customs. Ennius speaks of a *homo Romanus*, who wears the toga and is liable to bouts of religious anxiety, and of a *homo Graius*.[54] Some evidence suggests that the *Annals* contained a brief ethnographic survey of the Carthaginians, including their habits of hiring [**82**] mercenaries and practising human sacrifice.[55] In this context Ennius may have used genuinely ethnic notions of identity.[56] He refers to the Carthaginians as 'sprung from Dido' (*Poenos Didone oriundos*, *Ann.* 297) or 'sprung from Sarra' (*Poenos Sarra oriundos*, *Ann.* 472).[57] He

50 On *fides* see now Holkeskamp (2000).
51 See *Ann.* 268–72.
52 See e.g. *Ann.* 248–9, 304–8, 593.
53 *Ann.* 157 *ciues Romani tunc facti sunt Campani* and *Ann.* 525 *nos sumus Romani qui fuimus ante Rudini*. Two other fragments (*Ann.* 234–5 and 385–6) round out the picture, though the text and placement of either are very uncertain.
54 *Ann.* 165, 559, 560.
55 Skutsch (1985) 384.
56 Throughout this paper I presuppose the definition of ethnicity by Hall (2002) 9–10, with a special emphasis on the aspect he calls 'a putative subscription to a myth of common descent and kinship'.
57 Though Skutsch (1985) 475 observes that at least in the first of the two instances the usage is metaphorical and most likely meant as a taunt by a speaker.

was furthermore aware of the ethnic heterogeneity of the Roman army, which consisted of the Roman legions and auxiliary troops[58] and also resorts to Greek anthropological categories, such as *homo* (especially in the formulaic phrase *diuomque hominumque pater*) or the phrase *omnes mortales* in gnomic statements about humanity.[59] Just like Homer, he draws a distinction between human and divine speech, and is generally interested in linguistic variety – a trait not unexpected in someone who boasted of speaking three native languages.[60]

Aspects of ethnicity are thus not absent from the *Annals*. But in contrast to the legal status of citizenship, which defines who belongs to the Roman commonwealth and sustains the *res Romana*,[61] ethnic affiliations play a minor role in Ennius' conception of Roman identity. Unlike his contemporary Cato the Elder who in the *Origines* discussed the ethnic components of the Roman people as one of the many *gentes* of Italy,[62] Ennius by and large abstained from ethno-history. His focus is on Rome as a civic community that rose to dominance owing to a powerful citizen-army and aristocratic leadership. Rome is a citizenry rather than an ethnos, a *res publica* held together by legal ties, communal values and public institutions, not by 'blood'. As far as Roman epic goes, it is only with Virgil that the idiom of race, blood-descent and cross-breeding enters the genre in full force.

c. Religion

The impression of cultural heterogeneity in the *Annals* is perhaps strongest concerning religion. Roman religious beliefs and practices

58 See *Ann*. 229 with Dench (2005) 124. In a sense, though, the fragment also reinforces a contrast between Roman citizens (of whatever ethnic background) and non-citizens.

59 E.g. *Ann*. 574 *omnes mortales sese laudarier optant*.

60 See *Ann*. 20, 139–40,471, 477.

61 See *Ann*. 156 *moribus antiquis res stat Romana uirisque* and 494–5 *audire est operae pretium procedere recte | qui rem Romanam Latiumque augescere uoltis*. It is uncertain whether the last fragment comes from a speech or is a direct address of the poet to his audience.

62 This idiosyncratic construction is one of the strategies by which the *homo nouus* tried to sap the prestige of the noble families that dominated Roman politics, partly on account of their glorious past. Cato's emphasis on the genealogical and geographical position of the entire *populus* within a larger Italic context allowed him to sideline the gentilician memory of the Roman nobility. See Gotter (2003), esp. 127.

play a decisive role in the epic (suffice it to mention the *auspicium auguriumque* of Romulus and Remus before the foundation of the city); Numa's religious settlement seems to have received extensive coverage in Book 2; and antiquarian knowledge is elsewhere in the poem endorsed as a source of [**83**] insight into the workings of the gods and the running of the state.[63] At the same time, Ennius experimented with notions out of line with Rome's civic religion, resulting in deliberate and cheerful inconsistencies in the depiction of (access to) the supernatural. Thus the *Annals* explore modes of divination that operate outside the official procedures controlled by the senate: Ennius' Anchises possesses the gift of prophecy (courtesy of Venus), which turns him into a sort of *uates*, whereas Ilia foresees the future in a dream.[64] The wilful psychology of anthropomorphic divinities (Juno's in particular), who are beyond ritual domestication, is a key force in the epic. And Ennius revels in the striking polymorphism of Olympian deities (especially Jupiter's), who appear in various Greek and Roman guises.[65]

Many of these elements are epic topoi or the outgrowth of an exuberant syncretistic creativity, harnessed to give texture and appeal to Roman history. Yet Ennius also seems to have used religion to stage a clash in how cultures construe the interface between the human and supernatural worlds. Thus in his account of Rome's war against Pyrrhus, the Macedonian king considers human courage (*uirtus*) the most decisive factor in warfare; in the divine realm *tuche* reigns, an unpredictable force over which human beings have no control. According to Pyrrhus, an army should fight to the best of its abilities; but the outcome of a battle is ultimately up to chance.[66] The Romans, on the other hand, developed means of rendering the future more certain.[67] Their ritual repertory even contained a ceremony that, if properly performed, guaranteed divine support in battle: the *deuotio*. In this ritual, a member of the Roman army (at times even the general himself) consecrated his life to the gods of the underworld in return for victory. Should he fall in the battle, the gods were contractually obliged to help the Roman army conquer its foe. We

63 See *Ann*. 283–5.
64 See *Ann*. 15–16 (with Flores et al. (2002) 35) and 34–50; further Weber (2000) for the political connotations of prophetic dreams.
65 See Feeney (1991) 124 for the ensuing 'hotch-potch'.
66 *Ann*. 186–90.
67 See Rosenberger (1998).

know from other sources that *deuotiones* were part of the Roman war effort against Pyrrhus;[68] and *Annals* 191–4 preserves part of the ritual formula, presumably uttered by the general Decius Mus, who belonged to a *gens* well known for the willingness of its members to sacrifice their lives for the *res publica*. The *deuotio* is perhaps the starkest articulation of the 'contractual' outlook of Roman religion, a prime instance of the '*do* (in this case: my life) *ut des* (in this case: victory)'-principle that informs Roman expectations towards their divinities.[69] Put differently, Pyrrhus and the Romans dwell in different worlds. For the Greek, contingency is a fact of life, best accepted in an attitude of heroic fatalism. The Romans, on the other hand, operated on the premise that they could enforce divine support, i.e. all but eliminate supernatural contingency.

The question arises: which conception proved correct? Unfortunately, the historiographical tradition surrounding the *deuotio* of the third Decius at Ausculum, a battle [**84**] that the Romans lost, as well as the fragmentary state of the epic, make this question impossible to decide.[70] Eventually, of course, Rome vanquished Pyrrhus and the campaign became history: one more proof of the special relationship between the Romans and their gods on their annalistic march through time. At the same time it appears that Ennius granted significant narrative space to alternative conceptions of the workings of divine forces in the universe, such as the Hellenistic concept of *tuche*, which he renders with *fortuna*,[71] and he arguably put the tragic 'commonplace of Fortune bringing down the mighty' into the mouth of Scipio.[72]

d. Literary format and conception of history

In 189, i.e. several years before Ennius started out on the epic, the poet and his patron at the time, Fulvius Nobilior, returned from the campaign

68 See Zonaras 8.5 with Flaig (1991) 135.

69 Though the actual formula '*do ut des*' does not occur in our sources: see Cancik-Lindemaier (2000) 72.

70 For the complexity of the problem see the exchange between Skutsch and Cornell (who argues that the fragment should be assigned to another book): Skutsch (1985) 353–5, Cornell (1986), Skutsch (1987), Cornell (1987), now also Suerbaum (1995) 43 n. 25, who cautiously lends his support to Skutsch on the basis of the Ennius papyri from Herculaneum. Further scholarship on the *deuotio* includes Janssen (1981) and Masselli (1999).

71 See e.g. *Ann*. 258–60 and 312–13.

72 *Ann*. 312–13.

against the Aetolian city Ambracia with three items in tow: a claim to celebrate a triumph (highly contested, but finally granted); plundered goods, including statues of the Muses; and a Greek idea: to represent the evolution of a civic community in time by means of a list matching years with eponymous magistrates.[73] As Jörg Rüpke has recently made plausible, Fulvius put this idea into practice after his election to the censorship in 179. He endowed a temple of Hercules with a portico, where he set up the statues of the Ambracian Muses (thus creating the temple *Herculis Musarum*) and had a wall of the temple decorated with a calendar as well as lists of Roman consuls and censors, 'from the first beginnings of the *res publica* down to his own times', but open to future additions.[74] The monument realized for the first time the form that later generations of Romans and earlier generations of modern scholars came to see as the quintessential shape of Roman republican history: the annalistic scheme.[75] Ennius' epic is the perfect complement to the building complex. The relationship of Hercules and the Muses suggestively mirrors that of Fulvius and Ennius,[76] and the *Annals* celebrated in the last book of the first edition the key event in Fulvius' career, the sacking of Ambracia. With his commitment to Greek poetics, from the choice of [**85**] the hexameter to his invocation of the Muses, to his self-portrayal as *alter Homerus*, Ennius further re-enacted in verse the transferral of the Greek Muses to Rome. And just like the list of consuls and censors, the *Annals* provided a unified vision of Roman history, combining the achievement of various families in one display – in contrast to the fragmented gentilician memorial culture that, despite being grounded in achievement for the commonwealth, had its ideological and conceptual basis in individual families. The wide range of aristocrats who found entry into both the list and the epic has interesting affinities with the censorship that Fulvius Nobilior held at the time. As soon as he was elected, Fulvius Nobilior reconciled himself with his inveterate enemy

73 See Rüpke (1993), (1995b); further Chaniotis (1988) 186–219 on *pinakes* and *anagraphai* of magistrates or victors at the Olympic Games in Greek cities and their differences to narrative historiography.

74 For the temple see e.g. Suerbaum (1968) 347–9, Rüpke (1995a) 334–6 and, most recently, Sciarrino (2004) 45–6.

75 See Gotter and Luraghi (2003) for a new assessment of the term 'annalistic'. I presuppose their precise definition.

76 On Ennius and Fulvius' cultural politics see generally Rüpke (1995a) 331–68.

Marcus Lepidus who was his colleague in office – a public commitment to the *concordia* expected of censors, which Ennius duly celebrated in the *Annals*. In fact, both the temple display and Ennius' *Annals* breathe the authority and the ideology of the censorship, designed as it was to survey, order and reconstitute Rome's civic community, in particular its ruling élite.[77] Two values preside over the cultural politics of Fulvius and Ennius, as articulated in the temple of Hercules of the Muses and the *Annals*: Victoria (*militiae*) and Concordia (*domi*).[78]

Finally, just like Fulvius' list, the *Annals* were open-ended. It appears that Ennius, some time after publication of the original fifteen books, added three more.[79] From the point of view of literary critics who look upon epic as an 'exceptionally powerful narrative of literary and political closure',[80] the *Annals* are in this respect deficient. In an acute analysis, Philip Hardie has pointed out that annalistic history is unable to achieve a definitive ending: 'the constant flow of time renders the previous narrative incomplete and demands a new ending, which in

77 These considerations show why the debate between those who consider Ennius a *poeta cliens* and those who think he was a national poet, by pointing to the great variety of Roman nobles who receive praise in his poetry, is fundamentally misconceived. The outlook of the epic is 'national' (or 'civic'), but this perfectly matches the interests of Ennius' patron. The *fabula praetexta Ambracia* shows even more clearly why the opposition between 'patron poetry' and 'national poetry' does not work. If this play celebrated the sack of the city as a national victory it thereby advanced the particular interests of Fulvius Nobilior. Livy renders this patent when he reports that Fulvius asked the senate *ut aequum censerent, ob rem publicam bene ac feliciter gestam et diis immortalibus honorem haberi iuberent et sibi triumphum decernerent* – in the teeth of senatorial opposition based on the objection that Ambracia was not conquered (as was required for the celebration of a triumph) 'in battle' (*ui*) (39.4–5). Thus, if Ennius' *Ambracia* maintained that the city was sacked it could not help but take sides in the tussle over the meaning of the fall of the city – national triumph (the view of Fulvius) or irregular self-enhancement (the view of the senate). See further Witzmann (2000) 62–3 and, more generally for the significance of the triumph in Rome's political culture, Flaig (2003a) 32–48 ('Der Triumph. Individuelle Aneignung kollektiver Leistung'), (2003b) and Itgenshorst (2005). Already ancient analysts saw through the conceit of 'public service' and the proclamation of 'national achievement'. See e.g. the cynical remark at Sall. *Cat*. 38.3 *bonum publicum simulantes pro sua quisque potentia certabant*.

78 For the theology of Victory at Rome see Fears (1981); for Ennius' account of the reconciliation between Fulvius and Lepidus, Cic. *Prov. cons*. 20; further Stolle (1999) 73 for the wider historical context.

79 Zetzel (2007) subjects this piece of evidence to new scrutiny and concludes that we may be dealing with a misunderstanding. See, however, Jocelyn (1972) 1020–1 and Hills (2001).

80 Quint (1993) 291.

turn is doomed to obsolescence.' As a result, he observes that the 'Ennian epic is deprived of the satisfying sense of [**86**] explanatory completion available to the aetiological or ktistic epic that narrates events in the remote past as a kind of "charter myth" for the institutions of the present day.'[81] But the aesthetic liability turns out to be opportune from another point of view. Ennius did not call his epic *Annals* for nothing: the title indicates a sequence of years that was thought to stretch into an infinite future as long as the Roman community maintained its socio-political and military prowess and its religious order, or, to speak with Horace, *dum Capitolium scandet cum tacita uirgine pontifex*: the *Annals* are open-ended because Roman history is open-ended. Ennius' title alludes to the records of the pontiffs and, in doing so, turns their record-keeping into the basic plot of the epic: it tells of the divinely-supported continuity of the Roman citizenry in time, a history that, while featuring important caesuras, was not supposed to find closure.[82] This open-endedness has further parallels in Roman political culture, such as the annual rotation of office. Magistrates served for a year, during which, in the case of the consulship, they wielded power comparable to an omnipotent Hellenistic king; but when their term in office was up, they stepped down, yielding to their successor in due political process. This sort of arrangement, from which 'annalistic' history derives its name, would only come to an end if the Roman commonwealth were to be destroyed by outside foes or to undergo a change in political regime, from, say, free republic to principate. In other words, in terms of both content and form Ennius' *Annals* offer a multi-layered reflection on the cultural politics of their noble patron and are furthermore a *republican* epic *par excellence*.

3. Virgil

The categories Virgil uses in the *Aeneid* to define his epic voice, his epic world and his conception of Roman history differ sharply from those of his republican predecessor. If *poeta*, SPQR, civic religion and annalistic history are hallmarks of Ennius and the *Annals*, turning the epic into an innovative engagement with the society and culture of mid-republican

81 Hardie (1997) 140.

82 A very instructive parallel for an appreciation of the content of Ennius' form is Hayden White's discussion of the Annals of Saint Gall (1987) 6–11.

Rome, Virgil stages the return of the *uates*, prefers ethnic over civic notions of identity, employs 'destiny' as the prime religious category in defining epic history and shifts the relative importance of history and myth in myth-historical narratives about the past. All of these choices are profoundly unrepublican, in the sense that their ideological implications put them at variance with the political culture of the *libera res publica*. The contrast with Ennius, in particular, shows that Virgil conceived the *Aeneid* as a literary complement to a monarchic regime – at least on the categorical level.

a. The return of the *uates*

In his 'proem in the middle' Ennius polemicizes against Naevius with the barb *scripsere alii rem | uorsibus quos olim Faunei uatesque canebant* 'others have written on the topic in verses, which once the Fauns and seers used to sing', (*Ann*. 206–7).[83] Intriguingly, two of the components of this polemic are constitutive of the poet's voice in the *Aeneid* and a third also reappears in a positive key: Virgil sings (*arma uirumque cano*), calls himself a *uates*,[84] and has a lot of time for Faun(s).[85] In effect, he deliberately assumes the identity of a 'pre-Ennian' poet, who belongs to, or at least shares striking affinities with, the poetic and prophetic figures

83 For the concept of 'proem in the middle' see Conte (1992).

84 *Aen*. 7.41 *tu uatem, tu, diua, mone* (the poet addressing the Muse Erato).

85 Fauns accompany Virgil throughout his literary career. To give a few especially striking examples: in *Ecl*. 6 Fauns dance to the *carmina* of Silenus (a *uates* figure in his own right – indeed the *recusatio* context of this poem makes it tempting to detect already here an attempt by Virgil to insert himself in the mythic past of Fauns and seers evoked by Ennius in the proem to *Annals* 7), the *Georgics* is a poem about 'Faunic matter' (see *Georg*. 1.10–11) and in the *Aeneid* Faunus is the son of Saturn and the father of King Latinus (*Aen*. 7.45–9), who is consulted by his son in a dream-oracle on what to do about Lavinia (*Aen*. 7.81–101). The last passage features play on the same etymology of Faunus that Varro gives at *LL* 7.36 in his commentary on *Ann*. 206–7 as well as another Ennian reminiscence: *multa modis simulacra uidet uolitantia miris* (*Aen*. 7.89) recalls, via *Georgics* 1.477 (another prophetic context) and Lucr. 1.123, Ennius' dream-encounter with Homer, and Homer himself (*Od*. 11.601–2). See O'Hara (1996) 188 and Horsfall (2000) 98. Evander specifies Fauns as the primordial inhabitants of the future site of Rome (*Aen*. 8.314). And finally, there is Faunus' sacred tree (ruthlessly cut down by the Trojans) and the aid Faunus gives to Turnus in his showdown with Aeneas (*Aen*. 12.766–83). All of these passages arguably presuppose – to a greater or lesser degree – Ennius' polemics and their interpretation by Varro.

of archaic Rome before Ennius *poeta* arrived on Rome's literary scene.[86]

The self-promotion as *uates* has significant political implications and is *prima facie* surprising. As noted above the anticipation of future events practised by *uates* is out of line with the style of divination favoured by the ruling élite of the republic. John North identifies as characteristics of this style (*a*) a lack of emphasis on specifically prophetic utterances; (*b*) the absence of identifiable prophets or holy men; and (*c*) the reliance on 'anonymous teams of diviners who display an oblique or reticent relationship to their divinatory technique'.[87] In contrast, the prophetic utterances of the *uates* are specific; he is an identifiable individual; and his knowledge is inspired, coming directly from the gods. Unsurprisingly, the image of the *uates* in republican sources is most often a negative one.[88] Virgil's self-fashioning, then, presupposes a re-evaluation of the term *uates* and it seems that, ironically, this re-evaluation can be traced to Varro's interpretation of *Ann.* 206–7. The antiquarian used the lines as evidence for his claim that in the days of yore people used *uates* to designate poets (*LL* 7.36): [**88**]

> *uersibus quos olim Fauni uatesque canebant*. Fauni dei Latinorum, ita ut et Faunus et Fauna sit; hos uersibus quos uocant Saturnios in siluestribus locis traditum est solitos fari <futura, a> quo fando Faunos dictos. antiquos poetas uates appellabant a uersibus uiendis, ut <de> poematis cum scribam ostendam.
>
> 'In those verses which once the Fauns and the poets used to sing.' Fauns are divinities of the Latins, in the sense that there is both a Faunus and a Fauna. Tradition has it that they were accustomed to tell of future events in the so-called Saturnian verses in wooded spots, from which telling they were called Fauns. They used to call the old poets *uates* from 'plaiting verses', as I shall show when I write *On poems*.

86 Dahlmann (1948) 346–7; cf. Bickel (1951).

87 North (2000a) 66.

88 See already Dahlmann (1948) 344 with reference to Livy 25.1.8, 39.8.3, 39.16.8 (cf. 35.48.13); further North (2000a) on the suppression of independent prophets by the ruling élite (and hence our aristocratic sources as well). The only other time the term *uates* occurs in the fragments of the *Annals*, its connotations are also negative (374 with Skutsch (1985) 540). For the interesting use Cato the Elder made of the term in his authorial self-fashioning see Cugusi and Sblendorio Cugusi (2001) 2.424.

The passage raises three questions: should *antiquos* be emended to *antiqui*?[89] Did Varro (and Cicero at *Brut*. 75) misunderstand Ennius by assuming that Ennius counted Naevius among the *uates*?[90] And is the Ennius-passage Varro's only testimony that poets were once also called *uates*?[91] For our purposes it suffices to note that this is our earliest evidence for a positive conception of *uates* as poet. Varro's (mis) interpretation of Ennius, together with the two etymologies he himself proposed for *uates*, by which the *uates* as poet becomes associated with both *ars* and *ingenium*, paved the way for the appropriation of the term by the Augustan poets.[92] By assuming the role of *uates*, they could lay claim to a Greek tradition of inspired poetry reaching back to Orpheus and Homer as well as indigenous Roman traditions of song and divination.[93] The Augustan *uates*, secure in his supreme literary sophistication, which Ennius felt he needed to underscore by calling himself *poeta*, saw no difficulties in reviving the notion of the 'primitive poet', thereby engaging in a special type of self-empowerment. The 'primitive poet' was thought to have 'a serious contribution to make to the progress of his society'; he therefore could lay claim to powerful socio-political and cultural authority, grounded in the belief that the (divinely inspired) poet has 'privileged access [**89**] to eternal truths' and can hence assume

89 Suerbaum (1968) 259 n. 737 solves the problem by reading the transmitted text in the sense (*antiqui*, *uelut Ennius*,) *antiquos poetas uates appellabant*. (The paper by Jocelyn (1995) is based on a misunderstanding of Varro: he believes that the passage implies that 'the noun *uates* had by the middle of the first century disappeared from ordinary discourse' (20). Apart from this clearly not being the case, Varro says no such thing: he only points out that the ancients also used the noun in the sense of *poeta*, in addition to the common meaning of 'soothsayer'.)

90 See Dahlmann (1948), who argues that Ennius did not count Naevius among the *uates*, but says only that the poetry of his predecessor is like the verses of the soothsayers (i.e. uses the same metre). This, however, seems to underread Ennius' polemic intent. See Suerbaum (1968) 343.

91 This question is particularly difficult to decide since Varro's *On poems* has not survived.

92 Apart from the derivation he gives in *LL* 7.36, Varro in his *De poematis* proposes to derive *uates* from *uis mentis*: see Serv. auct. *ad Aen*. 3.443, schol. Bern. *ad Ecl*. 9.34 and Isid. *Orig*. 8.7.3, presumably on the Greek precedent that links *mantis* with *mania* (see Dahlmann (1948) 339). Korenjak (1999) suggests that Virgil, in his letter to Augustus (transmitted by Macr. *Sat*. 1.24.11), puns on this etymology when he writes about his work on the *Aeneid*: ... *sed tanta inchoata res*, *ut paene uitio mentis tantum opus ingressus mihi uidear* ...

93 The literary background for the figure of the *uates* is well set out by Hardie (1986) 11–32.

a special civilizing function within society at large.[94] This chimes well with the new political realities of the principate. If in the republic ultimate authority of communication with the gods rested with the senate,[95] its disempowerment under Augustus made room for the re-evaluation of other channels to the supernatural sphere. In the *Aeneid*, at any rate, the political figure who complements the *uates* is the king.

Virgil experimented with the voice of the *uates* already in the *Eclogues*, in particular *Eclogue* 4,[96] but it is in the *Aeneid* that the *uates* re-emerges in the full glory of his primordial might. The very plot of the poem is set in the period that Ennius dismisses with the temporal marker *olim* – the age of Fauns and seers, the mythic age when prophetic song was still alive. Since Virgil, as epic narrator, returns to quasi-Homeric anonymity, the best way to illustrate the political dimension of the *uates*-figure in and of the *Aeneid* is by looking at the interaction between the epic protagonist and *uates* in the text. Particularly instructive is the opening of *Aeneid* 6, which contains Aeneas' meeting with the most prominent *uates* in the poem, viz. the Sibyl, the ur-mother of them all as it were, who holds the key of access to Roman history. The verses leading up to the encounter between her and Aeneas illustrate the close affinity between the *rex* and *uates* in the text as well as the *uates* of the text and the *princeps*. *Aeneid* 6 opens with the arrival of the Trojans at Cumae: at this point Aeneas and his crew part company. First, the crew (*Aen*. 6.5–8):

> iuuenum manus emicat ardens
> litus in Hesperium; quaerit pars semina flammae
> abstrusa in uenis silicis, pars densa ferarum
> tecta rapit siluas inuentaque flumina monstrat.
>
> The band of young men darts eagerly onto the Hesperian shore; some seek the seeds of fire hidden in veins of flint; some ravish the woods, the thick homes of wild beasts, and point out newly-discovered streams.

94 The quotations come from Hardie (1986) 18. See now also Newman and Newman (2005) 306–18.

95 North (2000b) 28.

96 Newman (1967a), (1967b) offers an exhaustive discussion of the use of *uates* by the Augustan poets. O'Hara (1990) 176–84 agreeably complicates the picture, even though his emphasis on the possibility of the *uates* to 'conceal, equivocate, fail, or deceive' (180) is ultimately unconvincing: see Schiesaro (1993).

The lines invoke a charming scene of buzzing excitement: the young men jump onto the land, fetch wood and water, light fires and marvel at the landscape. Virgil uses recherché images to describe the objects of their attention (*semina ... abstrusa*, *densa ferarum tecta*), but the activities the men engage in are utterly banal, concerning the basic needs of daily life. The quotidian ephemerity of their efforts has its counterpart in the indeterminate geography: the woods and rivers that form the backdrop to their doings remain unnamed. Virgil has chosen plain paratactic syntax to describe their [**90**] hustle and bustle: *emicat – quaerit – rapit – monstrat*. Then the focus switches to Aeneas (*Aen*. 6.9–13):

> at pius Aeneas arces quibus altus Apollo
> praesidet horrendaeque procul secreta Sibyllae,
> antrum immane, petit, magnam cui mentem animumque
> Delius inspirat uates aperitque futura.
>
> But faithful Aeneas heads for the citadel over which high Apollo presides and the distant and secluded recess – a vast cave – of the dread Sibyl, into whom the Delian seer breathes an enlarged mind and soul and reveals the future.

The opening *at* sets up a contrast between these four lines and the previous ones that operates on several levels. To begin with, there is the distinction between Aeneas in the resplendent glory of his epic epithet *pius* and his faceless men. While they collectively go on a random ramble through the indistinct landscape of Italy, taking care of subsistence with practical skills, Aeneas' movements are oriented towards a higher goal. With purpose he seeks out (*petit*) a specific location of supreme religious import, the cave of the Sibyl at Cumae. As will emerge later on, he is not alone in his quest, but Virgil for the time being chooses to suppress his entourage.[97] What we have, to put the point in Foucauldian terms, is (regal) power in search of (divine) knowledge. Virgil underscores the distinction between the leader and the led through a variety of stylistic devices. The horizontal topography mapped out in the previous lines yields to vertical imagery that functions both on the literal and

97 Aeneas' companions suddenly enter the picture at 6.34 when the verb switches to plural, at which point we also learn that the hero had sent Achates ahead of him to announce his arrival to the Sibyl: *praemissus Achates* (34).

the metaphorical level. Terms such as *arces*, *altus*, *praesidet* and *antrum* suggest a natural architecture that stretches from the top to the bottom of the universe and finds its social correlative in hierarchies of power, especially the power Apollo wields over the Sibyl. The poet achieves a similar effect by switching from parataxis to hypotaxis. The plain subject-object formations he used of the crew give way to an elaborate construction dominated by two subordinate clauses that specify complex relationships of domination as well as the existence of something above ordinary human experience.

In all, the verses devoted to Aeneas raise issues of power and knowledge, hierarchy and order, participation in divine wisdom and orientation in time and space – the building blocks, in short, of a political theology in which two figures assume positions of special prominence: the king, a privileged representative of his community, and the prophet, who functions as intermediary of the divine.[98] The scenes that follow indicate that the thematics Virgil sketches out in the mythic past have a contemporary relevance. [**91**] In his prayer to the divine patron of the Sibyl, Apollo (a *uates* in his own right), Aeneas promises to build a marble temple in honour of the god and his sister if they support his mission. Already Servius spotted that Virgil here acts as *uates retrouersus*, prefiguring current events: on 9 October 28 BCE, Octavian fulfilled the vow of his ancestor by inaugurating the temple of Apollo on the Palatine.[99] The analogy between Aeneas and the Sibyl and Augustus and Virgil is readily apparent, in particular since the passage both reflects and reinforces efforts by the *princeps* to change the political value of the Roman collection of Sibylline oracles. During the *libera res publica*, the books were stored in the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitol hill, presided over by the priestly college of the *quindecimuiri sacris faciundis*, and consulted only at the behest of the senate.[100] Augustus put his stamp on the collection when he had several

98 For the concept of 'political theology' see Assmann (2000), for an instructive comparandum Detienne (1996) 15–16.

99 Servius *ad Aen*. 6.69 *ut solet miscet historiam: nam hoc templum in Palatio ab Augusto factum est. sed quia Augustus cohaeret Iulio, qui ab Aenea ducit originem, uult Augustum parentum uota soluisse*. See most recently Barchiesi (2005) 282.

100 The precise process of consultation remains a mystery, though we may assume some sort of cooperation between magistrates, senate, and the *quindecimuiri*. See further Rzach (1923), Momigliano (1988) 4, Parke (1988) 191, Orlin (1997) 82–3, Gauger (1998) 381–2.

thousand apocryphal oracles burned and transferred the consolidated collection to the temple of Apollo on the Palatine.[101] In a similar vein, *Aeneid* 6 overwrites the republican aetiology of the Sibylline books. The legend, which had it that Tarquinius Superbus acquired the books from an old woman,[102] chimed well with the ideological preferences of the senatorial élite: conveniently, the buyer and his family were soon to be expelled from the city, which meant that 'no subsequent Roman could claim to have a special connection to the Books or a special ability to interpret them'.[103] Likewise, the legend thematizes the domestication of charismatic authority: Rome acquired a corpus of inspired texts, not a prophetess in direct contact with the sphere of the divine. In terms of predictability and control, a body of esoteric writing restricted to élite exegesis has clear advantages over a possessed woman who rants and raves as a means of communicating with the gods. As Ogilvie notes, 'the Sibyl, as opposed to the books, played no part in Roman religion'.[104]

In the *Aeneid*, Virgil thus outflanks the republican institution of the Sibylline oracles by reactivating the live voice of the Sibyl, providing a different aetiology for the collection, and linking the figure and her prophecies to the Augustan principate through allusions to contemporary events and his own elective affinity with the Sibyl as a contemporary prophet. If Ennius situated himself as *poeta* in relation to *patres* and [**92**] *ciues*, Virgil chooses a configuration more suited both to the mythic time in which the plot of his narrative unfolds and the Augustan present (the telos of his story). In this configuration power resides with monarchs and knowledge with diviners who may double as poets.[105]

101 The concluding words of Aeneas' request to the Sibyl, i.e. that she should convey her knowledge orally (76 *ipsa canas oro*) and not entrust her *carmina* to leaves lest they be scattered around as playthings of the winds (74-5 *foliis tantum ne carmina manda, | ne turbata uolent rapidis ludibria uentis*), thus not only pick up on the advice of Helenus at *Aen*. 3.441-57, but may also be read as an endorsement of the living voice, and an underhanded aetiology of how Sibylline oracles outside the official collection (the kind that Augustus had burned) could get into wider circulation in the first place.

102 So Dion. Hal. 4.62, Gell. 1.19.1, Servius *ad Aen*. 6.72, Zonaras 7.11.1, Tzetzes on Lycophron 1279.

103 Orlin (1997) 77.

104 Ogilvie (1965) 654.

105 In a familiar move in the game of intertextual one-upmanship, Virgil retroactively turns Ennius into a *uates*. When he calls Vulcan *haud uatum ignarus* (*Aen*. 8.627)

b. From *ciuitas* to *ethnos*, from *gentes Romanae* to *gens Romana*

Just as Virgil opts for a diverse authorial *persona*, so too the categories that define the socio-political universe of the *Aeneid* differ from those of the *Annals*. Programmatic pointers occur already in the proem and are picked up repeatedly in other prominent places in the epic. After a brief survey of the evidence, this section will focus on the implications of Virgil's (ethnic) notion of Roman identity for his conception of Roman history, in particular in the so-called parade of heroes at the end of *Aeneid* 6, Virgil's 'miniature version' of Ennius' *Annals*.

In the core proem to the *Aeneid* Virgil singles out three entities that came into existence as a result of Aeneas' arrival in Italy: the *genus Latinum*, the *Albani patres*, and the city of Rome. *Genus Latinum* and *Albani patres* are categories distinctly different from *senatus populusque Romanus*. The former recalls Cato the Elder's ethnic view of early Roman history, which is duly cited by Servius *ad locum*.[106] As already observed (above n. 62), Cato's emphasis on the genealogical and geographical position of the entire Roman people (conceived as an ethnic entity) within a larger Italic context was one of the strategies by which he sidelined the ruling élite of the Roman *res publica* in his *Origines*.[107] 'The fathers of Alba', which hints at a similar agenda for the *Aeneid*, implies a comparable slight of the nobility. 'Fathers' is, of course, a synonym for senators in republican authors, but the *patres* Virgil has in mind are the kings of Alba Longa. This, as Sergio Casali shows, is a direct confrontation with and contradiction of the view of early Roman history Ennius presented in the *Annals* and points to the new centre of Roman society: the house of Caesar and the *gens Iulia*.[108]

The extended proem elaborates on the ethnic identity of the Roman people adumbrated by *genus Latinum*. Virgil calls the people destined to

in anticipating the totality of Roman history on the Shield of Aeneas, the most prominent representative of the anonymous poet–prophets is of course Ennius. See Servius' comment on the first scene on the Shield, the she-wolf and the twins: *sane totus hic locus Ennianus est* (*ad Aen*. 6.631).

106 Serv. *ad Aen*. 1.6 = Cato, *Orig*. fr. 1.6 Ch. (= 5 P): *Cato in Originibus hoc dicit... primo Italiam tenuisse quosdam qui appellabantur Aborigines, hos postea aduentu Aeneae Phrygibus iunctos Latinos uno nomine nuncupatos*.

107 Gotter (2003), esp. 127.

108 Casali (2007). For the close connection of Caesar and Augustus with the Alban kings see West (1993) 285–6 with further bibliography.

destroy Juno's [**93**] Carthage a *populus* (21) as well as a *progenies* of Trojan blood (*Troiano a sanguine*, 19). Republican writers routinely contrast the *populus Romanus* with foreign *gentes*, and with *populus* Virgil picks up on this tradition.[109] But with the term *progenies* and its emphasis on blood-descent he complements the civic with an ethnic notion of identity, implying that the Roman people form a 'race' that can be traced back to Trojan ancestor(s). The same oscillation between a socio-political and a 'natural' identity occurs in the famous last line of the proem: *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem* (33). Hubert Cancik has recently drawn attention to the fact that the formulation *gentem condere* is conspicuous (in contrast to, say, *urbem condere*) since it borders on the paradoxical: an entity that has its origins, at least etymologically speaking, in nature (*gens*) is said to come into being through a political act (*condere*) that involves *foedera* between various peoples and is rooted in a divine plan (*fatum*).[110] Apart from the ambiguity pinpointed by Cancik, Virgil's use of *gens* generates a further peculiarity, or even, from a republican point of view, semantic scandal. As noted above, republican authors tended to contrast the *populus* (*Romanus*) with (*exterae*) *gentes*. With reference to Rome the term *gens* almost invariably referred to one of the noble *gentes* that formed the traditional polycentric core of the ruling élite.[111] In other words, Virgil here transposes the identity marker *gens* (and its synonyms: *genus*, *stirps*, *domus*, *proles*, *progenies*, etc. – i.e. a group of human beings, *qui sanguinis nexu cohaerent*), which hitherto tended to refer either to kinship groups within the ruling élite or to foreign peoples, to the people of Rome. The formulation *gens Romana*, then, is a subtle tweaking of republican usage and would surely have triggered consternation among those of Virgil's readers who belonged to one of the noble families other than the *gens Iulia*. For the singular *gens* with the totalizing adjective *Romana* eclipses the republican plurality of aristocratic *gentes*. Why only one, they could legitimately have asked? After all, in the republic some fifty noble families traced their ancestry back to the Trojans who arrived in Italy with Aeneas.[112]

109 See *TLL* 6.2.1849, 46–76.

110 Cancik (2004).

111 Contrast *TLL* 6.2.1845, 2–76 (*apud Romanos*) with 1845, 77–1846, 34 (*in aliis ciuitatibus, populis, regionibus, terris*).

112 For the *familiae Troianae* or *gentes Troiugenae* see Dion. Hal. *Ant*. 1.85.3, Lucr. 1.465. In other places, as Philip Hardie reminds me, most notably during the funeral

The implications of Virgil's manoeuvre to conceive of the Roman people in ethnic terms are radical, but tend to be under-appreciated. Concerning notions of identity in the *Aeneid*, scholarship has focused mainly on the (ethnic) differences between the Trojans around Aeneas and other peoples (in particular Greeks and Carthaginians) in the early parts of the narrative and the eventual merging of the Trojan exiles with the inhabitants of Latium, which is set up (though not narrated) in the second half.[113] But tied in with the attempt to define the Romans in ethnic terms is an argument with [**94**] domestic political implications. Virgil uses the language of blood-descent at various places throughout the poem to set up an overlap approximating identity between the family of Anchises and Aeneas (later called the *gens lulia*) and the Roman people. Helenus, for instance, conceives of the house of Aeneas as coextensive with the Roman people, who are thought of as his descendants.[114] The same ploy recurs in the *makarismos* for Nisus and Euryalus, where Virgil, in 'the most emphatic authorial intervention in the epic',[115] links the immortality of his song and its heroes to the duration of the reign of the *domus Aeneae* at Rome and the empire of the *pater Romanus* – again conflating the Roman people with the family of Aeneas and of the reigning *princeps*.[116] And in his prayer to Apollo at the opening of *Aeneid* 6, Aeneas announces that in the promised temple he will lay down the oracles and the secret prophetic utterances told to *his* people: *hic ego namque tuas sortes arcanaque fata | dicta meae genti ponam* (*Aen*. 6.72–3).[117]

games for Anchises in *Aen*. 5, Virgil acknowledges the Trojan ancestry claimed by various Roman *gentes*. But in the proem and elsewhere he chooses to incorporate this republican plurality within an overarching ethnic unity.

113 See most recently Syed (2005).

114 *Aen*. 3.97–8 *hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris, | et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis*.

115 Hardie (1994) 153.

116 *Aen*. 9.446–9. Syed (2005) 215–16 thinks that it makes no sense for Virgil to say what he says, namely 'that Nisus and Euryalus will be famous as long as the *gens lulia* exists' and argues that the phrase *domus Aeneae* means 'Romans in general'. But the point of the passage is, rather, that the literal and the broader meaning are in force at the same time – a deliberate ambiguity bound to be offensive to other noble families. *Aen*. 9.638–44 (Apollo commenting on Ascanius' killing of Numanus) carries a similar message, esp. the prophecy that warfare would cease *gente sub Assaraci* (642–3).

117 See also the use of *gens* by Jupiter in *Aeneid* 1 (276 *Romulus excipiet gentem*; 282 *Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam*) and the identification of all the Romans as belonging to the *gens* of Ascanius at *Aen*. 8.628–9 *illic genus omne futurae | stirpis ab Ascanio*.

The fact that Virgil and his characters regard all Romans as part of the *gens* of Anchises and Aeneas (and Caesar and Augustus) disenfranchizes the republican élite and prepares the ground for a novel vision of Roman history and its heroes. The most striking collection of such heroes Virgil found in Ennius' *Annals*, and Ennius becomes a prime interlocutor in those places where Virgil revolutionizes the historical memory of the republic, in particular Book 6. Already the meeting between Anchises and Aeneas is replete with Ennian reminiscences on both the linguistic and the thematic level (*Aen*. 6.679–83):[118]

> At pater Anchises penitus conualle uirenti
> inclusas animas superumque ad lumen ituras
> lustrabat studio recolens omnemque suorum
> forte recensebat numerum carosque nepotes
> fataque fortunasque uirum moresque manusque.
>
> But deep in a green valley father Anchises was keenly surveying and pondering the enclosed souls about to pass to the light above and, as it happened, was reviewing the full number of his descendants, his dear offspring, the destinies and fortunes of the men, their habits and their deeds.

[**95**] Terms such as *numerum*, *lustrabat* and *recensebat* evoke the republican *census*, a religious and socio-political event of the utmost importance.[119] But at the same time, Virgil leaves no doubt that the souls about to return to earth are descendants of Anchises and Aeneas: what Anchises here performs in his mind is a *census* of his descendants.[120] In effect, Virgil casts Anchises in the double role of *censor* and *princeps gentis*. Just as the juxtaposition of *domus Aeneae* and *pater Romanus* in *Aeneid* 9, this

118 There are striking parallels to Ennius' encounter with Homer (including the shedding of tears), followed by an exposition of cosmology and natural philosophy (in particular the doctrines of metempsychosis and reincarnation) and an account of Roman history. See Hardie (1986) 77–83 and Kofler (2003) 75–9.

119 See Norden (1916) 302. The censors were responsible for the *lectio senatus* and could brand those who violated the *regimen morum* with a *nota censoria* or even remove the offender from the senate: see Kunkel and Wittmann (1995) 391–471. Significantly, Octavian (together with his colleague Agrippa) held a *census* and *lectio senatus* in 28 BCE, revalorizing a ritual only irregularly performed in the last decades of the republic.

120 See esp. the formulations *omnemque suorum ... numerum* and *caros nepotes*.

conflation of a public magistracy and supreme position of authority within the *familia* implies that the *res publica* is co-extensive with the *domus* of Anchises.[121]

At least some of the anonymous offspring whose fates and fortunes Anchises ponders here receive names in the so-called parade of heroes (*Aen*. 6.756–886). Anchises begins his survey with Silvius, the last-born son of Aeneas. The kings of Alba Longa, Romulus and Augustus follow, then come Numa and selected heroes of the republic: first Brutus, its founder, then outstanding representatives of noble families. After the famous 'mission statement' come the praise of Marcus Claudius Marcellus, the destroyer of Corinth and, after an enquiry by Aeneas, the lament for Marcellus, nephew of Augustus and his heir apparent before dying at the age of twenty in the year 23 BCE. The end surprises and has been variously interpreted. The passage is said to symbolize the death of the future, to warn of hubris, to complement Rome's imperial power through a tableau of tragic suffering, or, indeed, to imply that the *gens* of Augustus – in contrast to the other *gentes* mentioned by Anchises – is doomed to die out.[122] This last interpretation, I submit, is wrong in the sense that its opposite is right. As several scholars have pointed out, the verses on Marcellus turn the entire 'parade of heroes' into a *pompa funebris* of sorts.[123] The aristocratic *pompa funebris* was the central ritual in the memorial culture of the Roman republic.[124] But in a republican *pompa*, only those ancestors marched who actually belonged to the *gens* of the deceased. In Virgil's conception of the Romans as one *gens*, on the other hand, with Anchises, Aeneas, and Iulus as *principes gentis*, members from all the republican *gentes* can join in the procession for Marcellus.[125]

121 The famous Ennian line *moribus antiquis res stat Romana uirisque* (*Ann*. 156) resonates in the background of Anchises' critical assessment of men and their habits. If the *Annals* were indeed imbued with the spirit of the censorship, then the literary reminiscences in *Aeneid* 6 acquire a programmatic political dimension. Anchises (and Augustus) and Virgil are reconstituting the Roman élite and the history of the Roman people just as Fulvius and Ennius did.

122 O'Hara (1990) 163–70, relying mainly on the – rather more subtle – work of Feeney (1986). Cf. Glei (1998).

123 See in particular the brilliant analysis by Feeney (1986) with much further bibliography, also Flaig (1995a).

124 See Flaig (2001), esp. 232 ('... das semiotisch aufwendigste und szenographisch wichtigste kommemorative Ereignis der römischen Kultur ...').

125 There is the likelihood – though admittedly no direct evidence – that the funeral

[**96**] The conceptual ploy that renders this autocratic tinkering with the central memorial practice of the *libera res publica* 'plausible' is Virgil's consistent emphasis on Roman ethnicity and the attendant conflation of the *gens Iulia* or *domus Aeneae* with the *populus Romanus*, in particular its aristocratic *gentes*. The republican heroes can appear in a funeral procession for Marcellus since all Romans mentioned by Anchises ultimately belong to one *gens* only, that of himself, his son and his grandson, of Caesar and Augustus. The programmatic opening of his discourse renders this policy of appropriation more than explicit (*Aen*. 6.756–9):

> nunc age, *Dardaniam prolem* quae deinde sequatur gloria,
> qui maneant *Itala de gente nepotes*, inlustris animas
> *nostrum*que *in nomen* ituras, expediam dictis ...
>
> Now then, the glory to attend *the Trojan race* in future, what *children from Italic stock* are held in store, the famous souls about to enter *into our name*, all this I shall set forth in my speech ...

Here the idiom of race, in the sense of blood-descent, as the defining feature of Roman identity, comes fully into its own. Anchises speaks of the Trojan origins of his *gens* (*Dardania proles*) and the further descendants from Aeneas' union with Lavinia (*Italia de gente nepotes*),[126] making it clear that he considers all of the souls under review part of his offspring, which becomes co-extensive with the Roman people. He closes the list of identity tags with the truly remarkable formulation that the souls he is about to name will, literally, enter into the name of himself and his son: *nostrumque in nomen ituras* (757). The gentilician name, such a distinctive feature of Roman society that had no equivalent in Greece, was the prime marker of identity for any Roman *nobilis*, indicating to which family network he belonged and which ancestors he could claim as his own.[127] Servius,

procession for Marcellus as well as the *laudatio funebris* Augustus delivered in his honour manifested similar manipulation of the republican ritual. For the *laudatio* as a source for Virgil see Horsfall (1991) 112.

126 The emphasis on the wider Italian context of the Roman people is a strategy familiar from writers who stand in antagonistic relation to the traditional ruling élite, such as Cato the Elder or, indeed, Augustus. For the archaic *proles* (a word 'dear to Virgil') see Horsfall (2000) 452–3 (*ad Aen*. 7.691).

127 Rix (1972).

for one, spotted what was going on and shrewdly glossed *nomen* with *gens*.[128] The categories with which Virgil and Anchises operate (such as *genus*, *gens*, and *nomen*) were 'Kernbegriffe familialer aristokratischer Erinnerungskultur'.[129] By co-opting all of the Roman *gentes* for the glory of his own house, Anchises drives a stake through the notional heart of the Roman aristocracy. His discourse heralds the subsumation of all *gentes*, which constituted the backbone of the *libera res publica*, under one all-encompassing *gens*, that of the *princeps*.

The language of blood-descent continues to be prominent in the section on the Alban kings, showing that the *Albani patres* of the proem are indeed the direct descendants [**97**] of Aeneas and his son, down to Romulus, Caesar, and Augustus. Silvius is referred to as *Italo commixtus sanguine* (762) and *tua postuma proles* (763), Procas gets the tag *Troianae gloria gentis* (767), and Romulus becomes he, *Assaraci quem sanguinis Ilia mater | educet* (778–9). The idiom Anchises uses in the republican section is less obsessed with blood. But the chronological inversion by which he puts the end (Caesar and Augustus) at the beginning again permits him to emphasize that all the Romans form one *gens* centred in the *gens Iulia* (*Aen*. 6.788–90):

> huc geminas nunc flecte acies, hanc aspice gentem
> Romanosque tuos. hic Caesar et omnis Iuli
> progenies magnum caeli uentura sub axem.
>
> Now look over here, behold this race, and the Romans that are yours. Here is Caesar and all of the offspring of Iulus about to go under the broad axis of the sky.

As in other places, Virgil here blurs two identity-schemes: the (as it were) 'agnatic' lineage of the *gens Iulia* that stretches from Anchises and Aeneas to the Alban kings, Romulus, Caesar and Augustus;[130] and a looser notion of Roman ethnicity by which the Romans become the people of Aeneas. His formulation is studiously ambiguous. *Romanos tuos* could mean either those Romans who on the basis of strict agnatic descent belong to the *gens*

128 Serv. *ad Aen*. 6.758.
129 Walter (2003) 273.
130 Tellingly, the term *sanguis* recurs with reference to Caesar, whom Anchises addresses as *sanguis meus* (835). For the semantics of the term see Guastella (1985).

Iulia or it could comprise the entire Roman people, reconceptualized in the *Aeneid* from the proem onwards as a *gens* in their own right. In this context, one feature of the parade of heroes that has recently attracted some scholarly attention may profitably be revisited. As Denis Feeney has pointed out, many names in the republican section are ill-defined: they can refer to more than one Roman noble. Likewise Virgil often chooses the generic plural when referring to the representatives of republican *gentes*.[131] This policy has a precedent. Cicero, too, delighted in catalogues of Roman nobles in the plural. Thus at *Pro Sestio* 143 he exhorts his audience to follow the example of 'our Bruti, Camilli, Ahalas, Decii, Curii, Fabricii, Maximi, Scipiones, Lentuli and Aemilii'.[132] As Wolfgang Blösel has shown, Cicero's sweeping co-option of the ancestors of all *gentes* is linked to his status as *homo novus*: having no noble lineage of his own, he uses appropriating rhetoric to create one for himself, turning all Romans of distinction into his notional forebears.[133] Virgil's strategy is similar: he also transforms the great republican heroes into 'common' ancestors of all Romans, but further subsumes them under the *gens* of Aeneas. Both thereby marginalize the distinctive profile of the traditional *gentes*. In the *atria*, *pompae* and *laudationes* of [**98**] noble families every office-holder and triumphator would have received individual recognition. In Cicero and Virgil the specificities of the gentilician memory fade into insignificance: for their projects and politics, so different in many respects but motivated by the same desire to simultaneously co-opt and sap the prestige of the traditional ruling élite, such attention to detail would have been counterproductive. To the extent that the distinctive profile of the other families blurs in the *Aeneid* that of the *gens Iulia* stands out in greater relief.

c. From contingency to destiny: the notion of *fatum*

Virgil's concept of *fatum* in the *Aeneid*, in particular its relationship with Jupiter, has generated a mountain of secondary literature.[134] To understand the way *fatum* works in the narrative is certainly an important challenge.

131 Feeney (1986). Thus we get the Decii and Drusi (824), the Scipiones (843) or the Fabii (845).

132 For further examples see Norden (1916) 313–14.

133 Blösel (2000); further Vogt (1955) and Kammer (1964) 161, also Steel (2005) 108.

134 See Heinze (1915) 293–9, Wlosok (1967) 30 n. 32, Schmidt (2001) 88; for further bibliography Pötscher (1977) 7–16 and Suerbaum (1980) 69–70.

However, by opting straightaway for a text-immanent approach, one can easily lose sight of a rather more salient problem: the fact that this concept is being granted such prominence in the first place. Virgil's elevation of *fatum* to the central religious category of his epic is thoroughly out of line with the conception of history dominant during the republic – an annalistic sequence of years with an open future. It is not that the notion of destiny did not exist. From time to time (in particular in moments of crisis), unlicensed *uates* appeared on the scene and disseminated apocalyptic visions of preordained disaster – only to be suppressed by a vigilant senate.[135] And in the form of the Sibylline oracles the senate itself had access to a corpus of writing in which history was, in some form or fashion, pre-scripted. But the contents of these books did not influence how the Romans imagined the theology of their history, namely a civic community marching on in time as long as it maintained good relations with the gods. The way references to *fatum* were deployed in the internal struggles of the late republic indicates its deeply problematic nature and renders it unsurprising that its connotations in republican sources are often strikingly negative.[136] In the opening period of the third Catilinarian, for instance, Cicero claims to have joined the immortal gods in rescuing the *res publica* 'from fire and sword and almost from the jaws of fate' (*e flamma atque ferro ac paene ex faucibus fati ereptam*, *Cat*. 3.1).[137] A few paragraphs later, it emerges that 'the jaws of fate' are more than simply a graphic image. Lentulus, one of Catiline's co-conspirators who hoped to become king of Rome, backed up this ambition in his dealings with the Allobroges by citing rogue Sibylline oracles and the opinion of unlicensed soothsayers (*Cat*. 3.9): [**99**]

> Lentulum autem sibi confirmasse ex fatis Sibyllinis haruspicumque responsis se esse tertium illum Cornelium, ad quem regnum huius urbis atque imperium peruenire esset necesse; Cinnam ante se et Sullam fuisse. eundemque dixisse fatalem hunc annum esse ad interitum huius urbis atque imperii, qui esset annus decimus post uirginum absolutionem, post Capitoli autem incensionem uicesimus.

135 See p. 360/87 above with n. 88.
136 See further Jocelyn (1967) 213 for the dramatic evidence.
137 For a detailed analysis of the entire sentence see Gildenhard (2009).

> Lentulus had assured them that according to the Sibylline sayings and the responses of the soothsayers he was that third Cornelius who was destined to attain kingship and dominion over this city, those before him having been Cinna and Sulla. He also said that this year was destined for the destruction of this city and empire, it being the tenth after the acquittal of the Vestal Virgins and the twentieth after the Capitol had been set on fire.

The passage nicely illustrates how radically a conception of history grounded in a notion of destiny differs from the annalistic scheme. Under the premise of an overarching fate, the amorphous sequence of years acquires meaningful patterns. In this particular passage, several figures of thought operate in synergy: typology (Lentulus is the third member of the *gens Cornelia*, after Cinna and Sulla, who will attain the kingship); the reliance on the inherent meaning of special numbers (here three and ten);[138] the emphasis on necessity, which implies a teleology (see the formulation *fatalem annum*: the year specified by fate); and finally the notion of socio-political apocalypse: the history of the civic community moves inexorably towards an encounter with destiny that coincides with a revolution of the *status quo*. But the idea of history as a realm of necessity (... *peruenire esset necesse*) is fundamentally at variance with a basic axiom of Rome's civic religion, which posited that impending danger, announced via prodigies, could be averted through ritual countermeasures. The elaborate system of messages from the gods, their reporting, interpretation, and expiation that constituted such a crucial dimension of official Roman communication with the divine sphere would have made no sense if the future were preordained.

Still, some Romans of the republic clearly found the idea of history as destiny very attractive to think with. Some years after Lentulus, Caesar too relied on the Sibylline oracles and the notion of preordination to back up his claim to kingship.[139] Cicero, for one, reacted allergically. In his late *philosophica*, especially the dialogue *De fato* (which he might as well have entitled *In fatum*), he rejects the notion of historical necessity,

138 The same numbers of course recur in Jupiter's prophecy in *Aeneid* 1.

139 See Cic. *Div*. 2.110 with Pease (1923) 528, who refers to Suet. *Jul*. 79, Dio Cass. 44.15.3, App. *BC* 2.110, Plut. *Caes*. 60.

associated as it was with revolution and kingship – with paradoxical results.[140] [**100**] By linking *fatum* to Stoic *heimarmene*, he helped to ennoble it, paving the way for its rise to unprecedented prominence during the reign of Augustus, courtesy, in large part, of Virgil.[141] The notion was tailor-made for the princeps: 'fate' is a powerful justification for *nouae res* because it endows the new and the revolutionary with a strong sense of inevitability. In the *Aeneid*, this profoundly unrepublican view of history finds its starkest articulation. If in Ennius' *Annals* strenuous ritual activity kept the gods domesticated, Fortuna was on the loose and history was open-ended, the Roman past assumes a rather more coherent outlook in the *Aeneid*. It is under Virgil's pen that Roman epic under the aegis of *fatum* assumes its 'sense of narrative coherence and completion' through a 'teleology that disguises power as reason and presents imperial conquest as the imposition of unity upon the flow of history'.[142]

d. Narrative form and political ideology

In two places in the *Aeneid*, Virgil evokes annalistic history à la Ennius. The so-called pageant of heroes contains 'a kind of a miniature summary of the whole of Ennius' epic' capped by the virtually verbatim citation of an entire line from the *Annals*.[143] And the general description of the shield of Aeneas at 8.626–9 is reminiscent of Ennian idiom and hints at an annalistic arrangement of the material (629 *pugnataque in ordine bella*). The strong Ennian colour of the first specific scene reinforces the Ennian presence.[144] In both cases, however, Virgil evokes his annalistic predecessor only to reconfigure his work. As Philip Hardie puts it with reference to *Aeneid* 6: 'for Virgil what Ennius narrates is unfinished business; it is his job through the medium of his legendary epic to map out the successful conclusion of the annals of Rome with the return

140 For the anti-Caesarian thrust of Cicero's theological writings see Momigliano (1984). While Caesar was still alive, Cicero frequently appealed to fate in order to diminish personal responsibility (his own and that of others).

141 For the identification see e.g. Cic. *Div*. 1.125 with Pease (1921) 321.

142 The quotations are from Quint (1993) 46 and Hardie (1986) 276.

143 Hardie (1993) 104; *Ann*. 363 ~ *Aen*. 6.846.

144 See above p. 365–66/92 n. 105.

of the Golden Age under Augustus.'[145] True annals, of course, do not conclude: we are dealing with a sublimation of Ennius' historical form within a new mythic conception of time tailored to the current political regime. The Shield achieves a similar effect: instead of displaying Roman history 'catalogue-style' and in chronological order it is centred, mirroring the cosmos. As far as we can tell from the scarce pointers in the text, the *pugnata in ordine bella* formed a circle around the central tableau: *in medio* (675) we have a depiction of the battle of Actium and Augustus Caesar's subsequent triple triumph.[146] The republican past and the annalistic scheme are thus bent out of shape, becoming a marginalized backdrop to a historical [**101**] vision, in which the mythic past and the Augustan present assume an overpowering pre-eminence.[147]

Coincidentally, this emphasis resembles the view of time one tends to find in oral traditions, where mythic origins link up to the present and the intervening period disappears into the so-called floating gap.[148] More to the point is the fact that this conception of history is in interesting respects diametrically opposed to the memorial culture of the Roman republic, which was oriented towards the *res publica* but had its material base in individual families. Each *gens* constructed its own version of Roman history on the basis of the political and military achievements of its members, and this history primarily revolved around or even consisted in former magistrates of

145 Hardie (1993) 104.

146 See Quint (1993) 21–31 for the conceptual schemes (in particular East vs. West) with which Virgil here operates.

147 Schmidt (2001) 78 offers some numbers. The republican period is dealt with in *Aen*. 1.272–7, 6.767–88, 808–25, 841–59 (59 verses in contrast to the 68 Virgil devotes to the mythic and contemporary frame) and 8.630–70 (41 verses in contrast to the 58 on Augustus (671–728)). See already West (1993) 284 who quantifies the number of verses devoted to members of the *gens Iulia* in Anchises' final speech in *Aen*. 6 as 71% or 77% on a strict counting, but as 'getting on for 90%' if one includes the 'oblique tributes to Julians'. Servius *ad Aen*. 6.752 and *Aen*. 8.625 offers intriguing comments on the historical insets within the mythic plots. See further Cancik (2003).

148 Schmidt (2001) 78–80, though the resemblance has little heuristic value *per se*. To speak of 'identity' between the historical profile of oral traditions and that of the *Aeneid* is an unhelpful exaggeration. The intervening period remains a very important presence in the poem: it is not a gap, and it certainly does not float.

the *res publica*: the mythological genealogies so important in Greece were of secondary importance at Rome.[149] No single family was able to monopolize Roman history, though the number of former consuls, censors, and *triumphatores* present in a *pompa* of course established a relative importance in a highly competitive context. The various histories promulgated by the individual *gentes* were 'open': a unifying plot or a manifest destiny did not exist. In short, the memorial culture of the 'free republic' was characterized by gentilician fragmentation, emphasis on historical figures and facts, competition and the lack of a totalizing perspective. In contrast, Virgil reduces the plurality of *gentes* to one overarching *gens*, which he makes the carrier of Roman destiny; his choice of medium for fashioning Roman identity is myth; competition gives way to hierarchization; and open-endedness yields to a powerful sense of closure and completion.

In preferring myth over history, Virgil had an interesting precursor. Mythic genealogies were particularly important to members of noble families that had little 'hard' symbolic capital in the form of recent office-holders and needed to rely on [**102**] surrogate sources to attract public recognition. One of these political losers was particularly inventive: Julius Caesar. In the funeral oration for his aunt he claimed descent from gods and kings.[150] Presumably the established nobility chuckled at the far-fetched conceits of this marginal voice in the discourse of Roman *memoria*. Yet in time the loser became a winner, and Virgil undertook to turn Caesar's idiosyncratic vision of the *gens Iulia* into epic orthodoxy

149 This is a fairly recent insight. See Hölkeskamp's inversion of Wiseman's rhetorical question of 1974 (164) 'with a god in the family tree, who needed consuls' in (1999) 20: 'Mit mehr als zwei Dutzend Consuln, diversen Dictatoren und Censoren im Stammbaum, wer brauchte da einen Gott?' He clarifies (19): 'Einem *nobilis* nutzte ein Gott zunächst und vor allem allein überhaupt nichts – dazu mußte man Consuln im Stammbaum und als verräucherte und halb zerfallene Ahnenbilder im Atrium haben.' This is not to say that mythic genealogies did not circulate at Rome. As already pointed out, some fifty Roman *gentes* traced their lineage to Trojan ancestors. In the late republic antiquarians started to complement the archived, displayed and enacted memories of individual families with systematic texts. We know of Varro's *De familiis Troianis* (Serv. *ad Aen*. 5.704), the *De familiis* of M. Valerius Messalla Rufus (*cos*. 53) (Plin. HN 35.8), and Hyginus, *De familiis Troianis* (Serv. *ad Aen*. 5.389). See further Bäumerich (1964).

150 See Suet. *Jul*. 6.1, further Hölkeskamp (1999) 19 and Erskine (2001) 19.

for the Roman people. Both in the *Aeneid* and Augustan ideology more generally, the mythic past and in particular the figure of Aeneas, the son of Venus, acquired foundational importance.[151] Once the view from the periphery had become installed at the centre, the former centre (the polycentric core of the traditional nobility) drifted to the margins – and with it the conception of history and the past of the *libera res publica* that found epic articulation in Ennius' *Annals*.

4. Conclusion

Virgil's self-fashioning as *uates*, his emphasis on an ethnic Roman identity, his elevation of *fatum* into the defining religious category of the epic and his choice of a mythic plot with one central hero are elements that interlock with each other and the Augustan principate. At least on the categorical level, the relation of the *Aeneid* to the *Annals*, of Virgil to Ennius, is thus not dissimilar to that of the 'restored republic' of Augustus to the 'free republic' of the preceding centuries. As Ronald Syme said, 'hostility to the *nobiles* was engrained in the Principate from its military and revolutionary origins'.[152] This is certainly true but only captures half of a complex phenomenon. Augustus (in politics) and Virgil (in the medium of epic poetry) sapped the traditional ruling élite of the *libera res publica*, but they did so slyly, so as to undermine their power while co-opting their prestige. Both poet and patron proved extremely adept in co-opting and deforming republican institutions and traditions – the censorship, the *pompa funebris*, the collection of Sibylline oracles and, last but not least, the republican author par excellence, Ennius and his *Annals*. Virgil's out- or undoing of Ennius thus amounts to an ideological rewriting comparable in scope to his Romanization of Homer or Dante's Christianization of Virgil.

151 As Erskine (2001) has shown, in the Augustan age the importance of Aeneas gets vastly inflated: he joins, and therefore to some extent displaces, Romulus as foundational figure.

152 Syme (1939) 502.

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Fig. 27: Hubert Robert, The Fire of Rome, 18 July 64 CE. Musee des Beaux-Arts Andre Malraux, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Robert,_Hubert_-_Incendie_%C3%A0_Rome_-.jpg

Chapter 11: Trojan Plots: Conceptions of History in Catullus, Virgil and Tacitus

Johannes Geisthardt and Ingo Gildenhard

1 Introduction

The stories surrounding the war at Troy, the eventual sack of the city and the subsequent westward journey of Aeneas have a long-standing presence in the mythic imagination of Italy and Rome.[1] The earliest evidence of the tale of Aeneas settling in Italy dates to the sixth century BCE.[2] Together with the saga of Romulus, the legend of the Trojan refugees gave Rome a double foundation story. When the Romans turned their minds to historiography from the second half of the 3rd century BCE onwards, they faced the challenge of correlating the two foundational figures within a unified and chronologically coherent account of their past – an undertaking that proved not entirely straightforward, especially since Greek precedents offered a range of options. If Hellanicus, writing in the fifth century BCE, had

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1 On the meanings of Troy in Greek and Roman culture, see e.g. Alföldi (1957), Galinsky (1969), Cornell (1975), (1977), Horsfall (1987), Gruen (1992), Erskine (2001).

2 Schauenburg (1960), Galinsky (1983), Erskine (2001) 143–7.

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Aeneas found Rome himself (with the help of Odysseus!) and Alcimus, writing in the fourth century BCE, makes Romulus Aeneas' son, who has a daughter Alba who gives birth to Rhomus, the founder of Rome, Eratosthenes, writing at the beginning of the third century BCE, put paid to such elementary genealogies when he fixed the fall of Troy at 1184 BCE and the founding of Rome in 753 BCE.[3] Only those authors blithely unconcerned with chronological compatibility issues (such as Ennius) could henceforth resort to the elegant and economical solution of connecting the two figures by turning Aeneas into Romulus' grandfather.[4] Others had to fabricate some kind of genealogical padding to bridge the temporal divide between the time of Aeneas' arrival in Italy and the founding date of Rome – enter the kings of Alba Longa (a solution favoured by Fabius Pictor and Cato the Elder, among others).[5]

[**242**] But antiquarian difficulties aside, one can easily see the attractions of having the figure of Aeneas with his boatloads of Trojan castaways as part of the foundation legend. Whereas the story of Romulus thematised issues in domestic (or Italic) politics, such as power sharing (or civil strife), succession issues, the relationship between the designated ruler and the wider sociopolitical and economic elite, the ethnic constitution of the citizenry, or the place of Rome within the wider world of central Italy, the Aeneas-myth was ideally suited to explore issues of more expansive remit, positioning Rome within and in relation to the wider (Greek) Mediterranean.[6] By the late republic, Troy figured in Rome's cultural imaginary in various forms, not least on the tragic stage: many of the mythological plays based on Greek precedents that bilingual playwrights produced from the middle of the third-century BCE onwards featured Trojan *sujets*, though not necessarily with a focus on Aeneas and his migration history: tussles between Greek heroes (such as the contest between Ajax and Odysseus over the arms of Achilles), Hector's heroics, or the sack of the city seem to have been rather more popular themes of

3 Hellanicus: *FGrHist* 4 F 84 *ap*. D.H. 1.72.2; Alcimus: *FGrHist* 560 F 4, *ap*. Festus 326 L; Eratosthenes: *FGrHist* 241 F 1a *ap*. Clem. Al. *Strom*. 1.38.1–5.

4 Serv. Dan. *ad* A. 1.273, Serv. *ad* A. 6.777; for discussion see Casali (2007).

5 Fabius Pictor: *FRHist*. 3–4; Cato the Elder: *FRHist*. 12.

6 For Romulus (and Aeneas) see e.g. Strasburger (1968), Cornell (1975), (1977), von Ungern-Sternberg (1993), Wiseman (1995), Carandini (2003/2014), Zwierlein (2004), Dench (2005).

the tragic repertory.[7] Scholars have sleuthed in vain among the surviving fragments for any explicit reference to Rome. Indeed, what such plays meant to a Roman audience proves rather difficult to determine.[8] One should perhaps reckon with the possibility that the spectators did not necessarily identify very strongly with Trojans cavorting on stage in *fabulae palliatae* as proto-Romans: Pompey, for instance, thought nothing of assimilating his conquest of Asia Minor to the Greek sack of Troy, and many Roman nobles liked to put on the imaginary garb of Greek heroes.[9] In this context, it is also worth noting that the Aeneas-legend long remained an optional element for authors writing on Roman prehistory. Whereas those who claimed descent from one of the Trojan families that arrived with Aeneas – or, indeed, from Aeneas himself – would have good reasons to play up the Troy-connection, the *homo nouus* Cicero, for instance, who was unable to tap into this source of prestige, consigned it to (polemic) oblivion in his 'constitutional history' of Rome in *de Republica* 2.[10] Still, we know of one *fabula praetexta* that emphasised the proto- [**243**] Roman identity of the Trojans, Accius' *Aeneadae uel/aut Decius*, the double title of which seems to anticipate the Augustan constellation of one privileged family representing all of the Romans (the entire nation being conceived as the *gens* of Aeneas).[11] Lucretius' keynote to his *de Rerum Natura* famously consists of a proto-Augustan invocation of Venus as *Aeneadum genetrix* (1.1). And Trojan ancestry was explored in antiquarian discourse and espoused in various media of aristocratic self-promotion, including coins.[12]

7 Jocelyn (2000), Scafoglio (2006).

8 Some scholars like to believe that a Roman audience would strongly identify with their Trojan ancestors on stage as a prelude to their own history; others are sceptical that this scenario constituted an influential variant of identity politics. See Gildenhard (2010) for further bibliography and discussion.

9 Champlin (2003).

10 Cornell (2001), Gildenhard (2013). Cf. Sallust *Cat*. 6, who has the Trojans and the Aborigines as founders and earliest inhabitants of Rome and suppresses *Romulus* (and Remus), perhaps in part because the fratricide at the beginning of the city's history would not have fitted well into his plot of recent decline. Conversely, Tacitus suppresses any reference to Troy in the proems to the *Histories* and *Annals*, both of which have an otherwise universalising remit (see further below): *dum Tacitus tacet, clamat*.

11 Dangel (1995) 239–42 and 375–7, Flower (1995), Jocelyn (2000), Manuwald (2001) 196–220.

12 Treatises include Varro's *de Familiis Troianis* (Serv. *ad A*. 5.704), Hyginus' *de Familiis Troianis* (Serv. *ad A*. 5.389), and, perhaps, M. Valerius Messalla Rufus' *de Familiis*,

The possibility of writing a Troy-centered (or at least Troy-inflected) history of Rome was thus an available option (among others). In this chapter we want to look at the overall conception of (Roman) history articulated by three authors, with a special focus on how they engaged with the legend of Troy, even if it be only via allusive gestures to the treatments of their predecessors: Catullus, Virgil and Tacitus. *Prima facie*, a neoteric erotomaniac from the late republic, Augustus' epicist and an annalistic historiographer writing under Trajan make for odd bedfellows. But these authors stand in intense dialogue with one another: in the *Aeneid*, Virgil responds to and reworks (and to some extent brightens) Catullus' unremittingly bleak view of (Roman) history, and his epic in turn serves Tacitus as an important point of deconstructive reference in his *Annals*. Troy thus plays an important role in the conceptions of history found in each of these authors, and Rome's Trojan ancestry serves as a focal point of their intertextual dialogue.

2 The Tragedy of Catullus: *Carmen* 64 and the Poetry of Doom

From the mid-third century BCE onwards, tragedies translated or adapted from the Greek, as we just had occasion to note, gradually acquired a prominent presence on the Roman stage (and elsewhere).[13] But where and when do we get the first tragic view of *Rome* – a view of Rome and her history, in other words, informed by what we may call the 'cultural unease' of the genre, the tendency of tragedy to shatter cultural certainties, to question and subvert established sociopolitical hierarchies and gender identities, to undo coherent temporal plots and sap delusions of progress, in short to stage the implosion of civilization? Despite some (more or less fanciful) allegorical readings, the fragmentary remains of republican drama manifest no trace of a tragic

though the scope of his work may not have extended to legendary genealogies (see Drummond 2013: 385–9 for discussion). See further Bäumerich (1964), Galinsky (1969) 220–1 (on the coinage of the Memmii who claimed descent from Mnestheus; cf. *A.* 5.117), Toohey (1984) and Farney (2007) on ethnic identities in Roman aristocratic self-fashioning more generally.

13 See e.g. Manuwald (2004), (2011), Schiesaro (2005b). For a survey of the various discourses and settings in which Greek tragedy began to resonate at Rome, even beyond the theatre, see Gildenhard (2010) 154–5.

approach to Roman history. Arguably, the first author who explicitly (i.e. non-allegorically) refracts *Rome* through a [**244**] tragic lens is not one of the tragic playwrights, but Catullus, who, in his *carmina maiora* (and *carmen* 64 in particular), yet also elsewhere in his *oeuvre*, implicates Rome in personal and world-historical tragedy. His views on history and time, his assessment of contemporary Rome (and his own place within Roman aristocratic society) and, ultimately, his poetics are informed by a distinctively post-Homeric and more specifically tragic sensibility.[14]

2.1 Catullus' Universal History

In the poem that heads the transmitted collection, Catullus dedicates his work to Cornelius Nepos, whom he hails as the audacious author of a universal history in three books (Cat. 1.5–6: ... *cum ausus es unus Italorum | omne aeuum tribus explicare cartis* ...) – in deliberate contrast to his own unassuming compositions, which he labels 'little trifles' (Cat. 1.4: *meas ... nugas*).[15] And indeed, his neoteric commitments, such as Alexandrian sophistication, cultivation of the small form or dismissal of other large-scale historical works as pieces of crap (see *c.* 36), suggest that Catullus practices what he professes in his seemingly self-derogatory keynote: firmly rooted in the here and now, his poetry celebrates the occasional and the quotidian in a faux-ephemeral evocation of transient beauty – the exact opposite, in other words, of writings about 'all of (cosmic) history' (*omne aeuum*).[16]

This, however, is not the whole story – far from it. In *carmen* 64 Catullus embarks upon an undertaking that rivals that of Nepos in scope and ambition by offering up his vision of universal history, even though

14 Parts of the following have appeared in *Omnibus* 72. See Gildenhard (2016).

15 See Briscoe and Drummond (2013) 398: 'Although *omne aeuum* ("the whole of history") strictly implies all history from the beginning of time, the work also evidently extended beyond Rome and Italy, as is demonstrated by the certain or probable references to Homer (F1), Archilochus (F4), and Alexander the Great (F6); and, as the first three fragments show, it included literary as well as political figures.'

16 *E pluribus unus*: Schwindt (2005b) 1–2: 'Die neoterische Dichtung, namentlich Catull, verfolgt eine Ästhetik der Eingrenzung, der nuancierenden Darstellung, der Okklusion. Catulls Sprachwelt beschreibt einen Raum der Immanenz, dessen *nucleus* das sprechende, handelnde und nicht-handelnde Subjekt behauptet. Sein Zeitraum ist unbedingt das *Hic et nunc*.' (As our discussion will show, the last sentence requires qualification.)

this redoubtable aspect of the poem is easily missed: readers routinely get lost in its complex structure and labyrinthine layers – and at times even argue, deftly making a virtue out of necessity (or turning their hermeneutic failure into a Catullan feature) that the entire or at least one principal point of the poem, with its apparent contradictions, temporal warps and intertextual loops, is to disorient and discombobulate.[17] Thus Theodorakopoulos (2000) 115–16 suggests that we ought 'to take Catullus up on his offer of the labyrinth ... To do so means to forget (as Catullus' [**245**] insistence on Theseus' and on his own amnesia asks us to do) the perhaps overambitious – and probably misguided – project of discovering the unity of the poem.' That Catullus' character Theseus of all people is the best guide to the poem's meaning is a rather curious suggestion: while not exactly a role model in any other way, he can claim the distinction of having managed to extricate himself from the maze, though of course with female help: labyrinths after all, however labyrinthine they may be, still tend to have an entrance (often doubling as exit) – and a potential thread that leads through them. The far more sympathetic character of Ariadne is perhaps a better guide to the poem than her male counterpart – and while Catullus may suffer from the same amnesia as his male hero, he also shares essential traits with his female heroine.[18] There is indeed a thread, as unerring as Ariadne's, that runs through the poem and ties its beginning and its end together.

If one follows this thread (admittedly one among many others), a powerfully linear conception of (universal) history emerges (suitably complicated and obfuscated), conceived as a story of progressive decline, accelerated at certain moments by watershed events, and reaching its culmination in present-day Rome.[19] Catullus marks the alpha and

17 Bibliography is plentiful, not least on Catullus' allusive play (e.g. Thomas 1982a, Zetzel 1983, DeBrohun 2007) or narratological aspects (e.g. Laird 1993, Gaisser 1995, Wasdin 2017). For the ideology of the poem see in particular Bramble (1970) and Konstan (1977).

18 As Putnam (1961) 170 puts it, in an excavation of the autobiographical in *c.* 64: 'Catullus is very much a part of Ariadne.'

19 Gaisser (1995) 579–80 suggests that in carmen 64 'Catullus has created a space separate from the logic and chronology of the external world where different stories come together to become the same story and all times exist at the same time' and follows Curran (1969) 191–2 in denying that the poem sketches out a history of decline, arguing that Catullus' pessimism is timeless, applying equally to all ages (613). Yes, time goes awry and chronologies clash in carmen 64, with its spatio-ecphrastic, web-like qualities – but this is not all there is to Catullus' conception of

omega of his teleology of doom by means of a telltale lexical bracket. The first major event his poem records is the setting sail of the Argo, the first-ever ship, an act which Catullus slyly configures as a breach of the natural order that amounts to sacrilege and causes pollution (64.11):

illa [sc. carina] rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten.

Interpreters and translators have struggled with this line. The text as transmitted seems counterintuitive. The primary sense of *imbuo* is 'to make wet' – a meaning quite appropriate for the inauguration of sea-travel, though one would of course expect the ocean to wet the ship. In Catullus, it is the other way around: the first ship (*illa carina*) 'wetted' (*imbuit*) the inexperienced ocean (*rudem ... Amphitriten*) with its voyage (*cursu*). Scholars frequently sidestep the problem, choosing to understand *imbuo* in the sense of 'to give first experience of'. Thus Godwin ('that ship was the first *to baptise* the unskilled Amphitrite with sailing')[20] or Trimble, who takes the line to mean that the Argo [**246**] 'inaugurated Amphitrite'.[21] But the paradox of the ship wetting/ baptising the sea remains in the Latin – even though 'inaugurate' elegantly effaces the problem in English. Some even argue that the offending line ought to be deleted outright: 'Furthermore, l. 11 does no more than impart the standard commonplace that Argo was the first ever ship, which Catullus' readers did not need to be told, but which would give a pedestrian interpolator the opportunity of displaying his erudition; alternatively it may have originated in a marginal citation of some other poet.'[22]

There is no need for such an intervention – on the contrary. The problem disappears if one brings yet another meaning of *imbuo* into play, which complements and completes, rather than cancels out, the other two. A powerful plot begins to emerge if we subsume 'to wet' and 'to give first experience of' under 'to taint/ pollute'.[23] True, the implications of such a reading shock – but do perhaps not come entirely as a surprise

history and time: such a reading remains stuck in the labyrinth and fails to achieve a vision of the overarching frame.

20 Godwin (1995) 53, our italics.

21 Trimble (2013) 268 n. 26. Cf. Harrison and Heyworth (1999) 105–6.

22 Trappes-Lomax (2007) 171.

23 In support, see O'Hara (2007) 34–41, Polt (2016) as well as Konstan (1977) 16, who also points out that *imbuo* can have connotations of sexual initiation.

for the allusively alert reader, given the gestures to Euripides' *Medea* as well as Ennius' Latin adaptation thereof in the opening lines: both plays start with the counterfactual wish that the Argo had never set sail.[24] And after the seemingly buoyant and joyous opening, *c*. 64 quickly takes a turn to the tragic, with the ecphrastic abandonment of Ariadne by Theseus and the song of the Parcae, which includes a synoptic account of Achilles' career that significantly sidesteps most of the hero's Homeric achievements and culminates in his post-Homeric, or more specifically tragic, pseudo-wedding to Polyxena in an act of human sacrifice, which segues seamlessly into the narrator's diagnosis of a post-heroic age in which crime and perverse modes of sexuality are so rampant that the gods decide to discontinue social (and sexual) intercourse with humanity.[25] The notion of an historical caesura after which gods ceased to intermingle with humans has a precedent in Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women*.[26] But the way in which Catullus links the decline specifically to the quintessential epic hero reflects the rebarbative representations of Achilles that prevail in Greek tragedy, in which the best of the Achaeans in Homer often figures as the most despicable of humans.[27] Achilles thus [**247**] serves as the pivotal figure that moves us from a propitious past (384: *ante*, 386: *nondum spreta pietate*) to a pernicious present, untouched by divine grace, devoid of justice and rife with suicidal conflict among kin. To articulate this apocalyptic vision of unspeakable crime, Catullus once again uses a form of *imbuo* (64.397–9):[28]

sed postquam tellus scelere est *imbuta* nefando,

24 For seafaring as an act of human transgression see Heydenreich (1970) 13–62, Gatz (1967) 229, further Feeney (1991) 330–34, (2007) 118–22 and Fitzgerald (1995) 149–51.

25 In his onslaught on Homeric epic, Catullus employs what Hardie (2012) has identified as a Virgilian technique – applied not least in his engagement with Catullus: the miniaturising of the plots of predecessors. Catullus reworks Homer in a tragic, post-Homeric key, giving us skewed versions of the Iliad in *c*. 64 (and of the *Odyssey* in *c*. 101, which mourns a nostos denied, that of his brother, who remains buried at Troy).

26 Pontani (2000), cited by Hardie (2005) 289; see also the opening of the *Cypria* (fr. 1 West). Catullus may also have had in mind the epithalamium for the wedding of Peleus and Thetis in the *Catalogue* (fr. 211 MW).

27 King (1987).

28 This element of ring-composition tends to be ignored by textual and literary critics alike. See, however, Konstan (1977) 16, who notes the recurrence of *imbuo* at the end of the poem in his discussion of l. 11.

> iustitiamque omnes cupida de mente fugarunt,
> perfudere manus fraterno sanguine fratres
> ...
>
> [But after the earth was *drenched/tainted* by unspeakable crime and all banished justice from their greedy minds, brothers bathed their hands in brothers' blood ...]

The recurrence of the verb would seem to confirm that the initial *imbuit* is indeed to be understood in the literal and powerful sense of 'to tinge/pollute'. At the end of the poem, the initial act of pollution has acquired universal remit. *Carmen* 64 thus presents human history as one of progressive contamination, as wickedness and vice spread all over the world – in a variant of Rome's imperial vision that has the city become co-extensive with the cosmos.[29] Within this trajectory, the second major watershed after the Argo's initial voyage is the war at Troy, as portrayed in the song of the Parcae about the career of Achilles from birth to death (and beyond).[30] In Catullus' story, the sack of Troy does not figure as the catalyst that enables the rise of Rome like a Phoenix from the ashes; quite the contrary: the post-Homeric world, which is the world Catullus lives in, is one of irredeemable doom (64.405–6):

> omnia fanda nefanda malo permixta furore
> iustificam *nobis* mentem auertere deorum.
>
> [Then everything speakable and unspeakable intermixed in wicked madness has turned the righteous mind of the gods away *from us*.]

The use of the first personal pronoun *nobis* endows the poem with a surprising autobiographical conclusion: we may start in the world of Greek myth, but we end up in contemporary Rome. Like Nepos' history, Catullus' poem encompasses *omne aeuum*. Like Hesiod, Catullus offers

29 The spread of the pollution from sea to land arguably riffs on the Roman conceit of universal dominion *terra marique*.

30 And there is a direct link between the Argo's maiden voyage and the birth of Achilles: in his choice of mythic variants, Catullus suppresses the story of dire exigency that compels Jupiter to marry Thetis off to Peleus since her child is fated to be more powerful than his father; in his text, Peleus, one of the Argonauts, falls for the sea nymph Thetis when she breaks the surface, surprised at the first ship.

a negative aetiology of the present, as he tries to account [**248**] for the reasons why we live in a criminally corrupt society: he offers a chain of events (however loose) that brought humanity to the present condition, with the sailing of the Argo and the war at Troy (preceded by the maritime encounter and subsequent wedding of Peleus and Thetis and the birth of Achilles) as important milestones.[31] Yet he outdoes Hesiod in his pessimism by profoundly implicating precisely the one age in his story of doom that in Hesiod's account arrests the progressive decline.[32] After miscuing his reader that he will follow Hesiod in celebrating the age of heroes, he proceeds to poleaxe his predecessor by turning this very age into the main culprit for the godless society we now live in.[33] And whereas in Hesiod's Catalogue of Women, Zeus devises the war at Troy as a means of annihilating the demigods, in an effort to end the heroic age, Catullus assigns responsibility for the rupture in the relationship between mortals and immortals in the aftermath of the Trojan war exclusively to the criminal tendencies of humans.[34]

2.2 Tragic Narratives of Self and the City

As the longest poem in the collection, and the only one written in (epic) hexameters, *carmen* 64 stands out. It is, however, not unique. The notion of Troy as a site of disaster is not limited to *c*. 64. It also registers in the rest of the *carmina maiora* and elsewhere in Catullus' *oeuvre*, often

31 The dialogue between Catullus and Hesiod is at times overlooked. See e.g. Rosati (2009) 362 or Farrell (1991) 315: before Virgil, 'there is no indication that Roman poets were at all interested in Hesiod per se', cited approvingly by Scully (2015) 142. Contrast Feeney (1998) 105 and van Noorden (2015) 190. True, Catullus 64 does not include a cosmogony. But the poem nevertheless offers a universal history of sorts, starting with the loss of the Golden Age and tracing the history of humanity down to Catullus' own times.

32 Cf. Hes. *Op*. 156–73: the warriors who fought at Troy enjoy an afterlife on the Isles of the Blessed.

33 Marinčič (2001) 487: 'Vers 51 verspricht eine Schau der *heroum virtutes* – was folgt ist eine tragische Geschichte von Betrug und Vergeltung.' Catullus may have been anticipated in this by Callimachus: as Harder (2003) 299 notes, 'the Trojan War is almost absent in the *Aetia*' and 'its aftermath is looked at in a rather negative way'. Other parallels between the *Aetia* and Cat. 64 include the fact that 'the various periods are not presented in chronological order ... the reader is forced to move through time in various directions' (299) – in defiance of the Telchines' order to produce an ἄεισμα διηνεκές (1.3).

34 See fr. 204.95–105 MW. Zeus did not entirely succeed: Most (1998) 113.

in a distinctly personal key. *c*. 64 thereby anchors, via its universalising frame, Catullus' vision of Troy and Rome across all of his *carmina maiora* (61–8), not least by situating his love affair with Lesbia in a world-historical context.[35]

The unifying presence of (allusive gestures to) Troy within the *carmina maiora* is easily overlooked since they are a motley collection: we get a wedding hymn (*c*. 61); a singing competition between girls and boys about the pitfalls and benefits of marriage (*c*. 62); an account of the self-castration of dandy-boy Attis after he fell under the spell of the goddess Cybele (*c*. 63); the 'mini-epic' on the wedding of Peleus and Thetis (*c*. 64); a verse-epistle [**249**] to his mate Hortalus (*c*. 65) that gives notice of the recent death of his brother and serves as cover letter to the subsequent poem, a translation of the 'Lock of Berenice', an episode from Callimachus' Aetia (*c*. 66); a dialogue with a door in the house of a dysfunctional family about the unsavory mischief that goes on inside (*c*. 67); and the so-called Allius (or Manlius – the text is disputed) elegy, a long reflection on Catullus' loss of creativity in the wake of his brother's funeral, his departure from Rome for his hometown of Verona and his ongoing adulteries with Lesbia (*c*. 68). But it is possible to read the *carmina maiora* as a set that tragically intertwines the process of growing up in its successful and unsuccessful variants with personal, political and world-historical reflections. The opening *c*. 61, despite undeniably disquieting touches, outlines a successful plot of maturation: the groom (an aristocratic power-broker by the name of Manlius Torquatus, probably to be identified with L. Manilius Torquatus, the son of the consul of 65 BCE),[36] is imagined as leaving behind his youthful period of sexperimentation (including homoerotic flings) to enter into a stable marriage with another member of Rome's nobility (one Junia), in which each partner is well advised to satisfy the erotic desires of the other. For such sexual symmetry enables not just mutual bedroom bliss but also continuity of lineage: in due course, it should ensure the birth of a mini-Torquatus (61.209: *Torquatus ... paruulus*), who will look just like his father. Scripted into the hymn, then, is a coming-of-age trajectory that leads from innocent childhood to youthful exuberance, to the willing

35 It also spills over into the *carmina minora*, both the so-called polymetra (1–60) and those in elegiac distichs (69–116). For the design of the collection see Most (1981).

36 See Feeney (2010) 213 with further bibliography in n. 36.

acceptance of adult roles of responsibility, including a joyful wedding, happy marriage, successful procreation and a future full of promise, at least for the male – within a wider thematic nexus that links female fidelity, sexual reproduction, legitimate children, familial continuity and marriage as a social institution that underwrites Roman military and political power and the safety of the commonwealth.[37]

After *c*. 61, however, matters go awry. The girl-chorus of *c*. 62 regard wedding night defloration as an act of pollution that results in the destruction of beauty and the loss of desirability. Attis, in *c*. 63, hacks off his genitals in an act of orgiastic delusion (or desperation?) just when he reaches the brink of manhood and is about to lose the androgynous good looks that made him the toast of every pederast in his hometown's gym – a shocking case of futile gender-bending and arrested development that ends up with her being trapped in a sterile and perverse marriage to the Great Mother goddess Cybele. And while *c*. 64 starts out celebrating the wedding of divine Thetis and human Peleus, it ends by noting that this union will be the last of its kind: their offspring Achilles and the atrocities he will perpetrate at Troy, such as insisting from beyond the grave on the sacrifice of the Trojan princess Polyxena on his tomb in a perverse wedding-to-death, [**250**] result in the gods deciding to leave a sinful humanity to its own vices. As we have seen, Catullus refers to this impious world, in which murder within the family, unspeakable sexual transgression and the general breakdown of kinship relations proliferate, as 'our own' (64.406). And it is certainly the world he inhabits and explores in the rest of the *carmina maiora*. In *c*. 65, just after identifying fratricide as a contemporary evil (64.399: *perfudere manus fraterno sanguine fratres*), Catullus announces the death of – his brother. While alive, this sibling left no trace in Catullus' poetry; by contrast, the impact of his death is profound. From *c*. 65 onwards until the very end of the collection all the remaining poems are written in elegiacs – the metre of mourning. Catullus (or whoever arranged the poems in this particular fashion) certainly makes the most of his brother's demise: within his literary world, it serves as cipher for the end of youth, the end of Catullus' family-lineage, the end of happiness and joy, and also, at least as far as metre is concerned, the end of literary experimentation.

37 Panoussi (2007) 289.

Troubled kinship relations also haunt the remaining *carmina maiora*. The Callimachean piece he translates in *c*. 66 revolves around the marriage of the Egyptian Queen Berenice II to her second cousin King Ptolemy III Euergetes – a common practice among Egyptian royals, but one that connotes incest in a Roman context.[38] The stage is thus set for *c*. 67, where we encounter a father who 'pisses into his son's lap' – Catullus' disgusting image for the defloration of a bride by her father-in-law since the groom could not get it up. And in *c*. 68 Catullus once again bemoans the death of his household, while pathetically cherishing sterile acts of secretive sex with Lesbia, hailed in one breath as both divine (conjuring images of golden-age intercourse across ontological divides) and a serial adulteress. In short, none of the characters we meet after *c*. 61 succeeds in properly growing up in socially and sexually productive ways, along the trajectory imagined by Catullus for Manlius Torquatus – quite the contrary.[39] And one of the most conspicuous failures in this respect is Catullus himself. In addition to the explicitly autobiographical touches of *c*. 65 and *c*. 68, he also intimates elsewhere that his youth has come to a bitter, indeed tragic end. The image of the plucked and withered flower that the chorus of girls in *c*. 62 use to reject marriage recalls poem 11, where Catullus, after having been victimized by Lesbia's voracious sexuality, compares himself to a flower at the edge of a meadow that [**251**] has been touched by a passing plough. And while *c*. 63 ends in the poet's wish that Cybele stay away from him, the brutal bond between effeminised Attis and his supernatural mistress bears an eerie resemblance to the dysfunctional relationship between self-effeminising Catullus and his 'divine' Lesbia (cf. *c*. 68.70).

A recurrent theme within this set of poems is Troy, not as the city that, after its sack, gave rise to Rome, but as a site of death and destruction. The comparison of Junia to Venus on her way to the judgment of Paris in *c*. 61 is one of the poem's troubling touches, which establishes Troy (as

38 For Roman notions of incest see Moreau (2002).

39 And whether *paruulus Manlius* will reach a ripe old age is not a foregone conclusion either. As Panoussi (2007) 288–9 points out, *sit suo similis patri* (214) 'is an eerie thing to say to a Manlius Torquatus, whose family tradition enforces a grim exemplary pattern of imitation of the father.' See also Feeney (2010) 210: 'Every Roman aristocrat is meant to live up to the model provided by his father, but this ideal becomes intensely charged when living up to the father's model means ... killing your son' – if in the interest of the *res publica*. There is a paternal axe hanging over every little Manlius, ready to strike at the slightest violation of ancestral discipline.

well as adultery...) as a key point of reference early on, to which Catullus will return over and again.[40] In the context of a wedding the comparison also raises the ugly spectre of disruptive discord: the apple of Eris that is at stake will cause the Trojan War that Catullus elaborates on in *c*. 64. Phrygia, where the city is located, is the region where Attis emasculates himself in *c*. 63; the song of the Parcae about the career of Achilles in *c*. 64 naturally focuses on his role in the Trojan War; Catullus' brother, so we learn in *c*. 65, has died and is buried at Troy – conveniently so, as it enables Catullus to interlock the personal and the legendary in *c*. 68, where he inveighs against Troy as an obscene and unspeakable abomination, the common grave of Asia and Europe and the burial ground of his own household (68.87–104).[41] Catullus links Troy to death – and the story he tells about himself, his values, his position in Rome and his inability to fit in. Put differently, he implicitly disowns the story that saw Rome rise triumphantly from the ashes of Troy. This version of history is not his story. As Elena Theodorakopoulos (2007) 325 has put it, with special reference to *c*. 68: Catullus' 'Troy is not the cradle of civilization, it is its grave.'

Put differently, just as Catullus does not partake in the positive plot of maturation he imagines for Rome's nobility, so he does not buy into the myth of Troy and the success story of the *Aeneadae*. Rather, he tells an alternative tale of defeatist insubordination against the foundation myth and the power of the Roman people. He denigrates contemporary Rome as rife with pollution, in particular fratricide, a variant of blasphemous killing and a cipher for civil war.[42] By contrast, Catullus celebrates literary and youthful, yet all too ephemeral exuberance, the fragility and evanescence of beauty and the sterile vanities of romantic passion – even though the imperial city he lives in marches to a decidedly different drum. With the megalomania befitting a first-rate poet, Catullus uses the *carmina maiora* to situate his tragic failure to find a place and identity in Roman society within a wider, world-historical context. [**252**]

40 61.16–20: *namque Iunia Manlio | qualis Idalium colens | uenit ad Phrygium Venus | iudicem, bona cum bona | nubet alite uirgo* with Feeney (2013) 78–85.

41 The story continues beyond the *carmina maiora*: *c*. 101 recounts his own visit to Troy, to pay homage to the grave of his brother.

42 See Horsfall (2013) 2.422 (*ad A*. 6.608) with further references to primary and secondary material.

3 Virgil's *Aeneid*

In the *Aeneid*, Virgil reconfigures Roman history in an Augustan key (3.1). In his literary world time is imagined as unfolding according to certain predetermined patterns, though Virgil is explicit in asserting that not all of history is already prescripted – thus creating space for a significant degree of divine and human agency, which stands in a complex relation to destiny's plot. By far the most interesting and powerful character in this respect is Dido, who self-identifies as a figure of Fortuna (Ms. Contingency), but also manages to bend fate to her will – something no other character in the poem, mortal or immortal, succeeds in doing (3.2). Through her agency above all Catullan sensibilities, and in particular a tragic vision of Rome, enter the narrative of the *Aeneid* as an integral element of Virgil's teleology and hence also a foundational aspect of his vision for the Augustan principate (3.3).

3.1 Virgil's Destruction of Republican History

If Ennius' *Annals* captures the political culture of the *libera res publica* in epic form, Virgil's *Aeneid* does the same for the Augustan principate:[43]

	Ennius	**Virgil**
Number of headline protagonists	many (esp. Roman magistrates and generals)	one (the ancestor of the *princeps*)
Main chronological focus	the (historical) centuries of the republic	(legendary) pre-history
Basic notion informing Roman identity	legal (citizenship)	ethnicity, lineage, blood-kinship (Rome gets re-centred in the *gens Iulia*)
Basic conception of history	open-ended (contingent)	closed (teleological)
Conception of time	defined by *Fortuna*	defined by *fatum*
The poet's voice	*poeta* (= skilled artist)	*uates* (= inspired prophet)

The *Aeneid* presupposes Augustus: it engages with the political realities of his new, quasi-autocratic imperial regime and the way it positions itself in time, including a large-scale rewriting and indeed 'destruction'

43 The table summarizes Gildenhard (2007).

of republican history – the history defined first and foremost by the office-holding representatives of powerful aristocratic families and their deeds that found literary celebration in Ennius' *Annals*. As in Augustus' own historical visions, such as the gallery of *summi uiri* on the Forum Augustum, this republican past is not absent from Virgil's narrative: in three prominent places in the epic – the prophetic [**253**] speeches of Jupiter and Anchises in, respectively, books 1 and 6, and the prophetic shield of Vulcan in book 8 – Virgil plays *uates retrouersus* in including three miniature versions of Ennius' *Annals*. However, all three 'annalistic' surveys of republican history are reconfigured to culminate in an Augustan *telos*. And in the narrative, too, an Augustan conception of history predominates, with the focus on one fate-led protagonist on the level of plot and an inspired poet-prophet – in many ways the literary equivalent of the *princeps* – in charge of the poem.

Instead of an annalistic plot, with its rotating protagonists, Virgil's epic puts a single hero in the narrative limelight; moreover, in this understanding of Roman history, one specific *gens* comes to represent the whole. What the *Aeneid* scripts is not just the prehistory of the founding of Lavinium (1.5: ... *dum conderet urbem*) as a preliminary step towards the founding of Rome (1.6–7: *unde ... altae moenia Romae*). It is also the founding of the Roman race (1.33: *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*). This formulation implicitly disenfranchises republican ways of thinking about (Roman) history: it eclipses the plurality of *gentes*, whose outstanding representatives defined Roman republican politics; and it substitutes an ethnic notion (*gens*) for an identity rooted in the legal criterion of citizenship, i.e. the *populus Romanus*. Virgil often employs this republican idiom and acknowledges, indeed embraces, the presence of other elite families in his narrative; yet as with Ennius and his republican, annalistic plot, which he integrates and subsumes within a novel conception of history grounded in the principate, he absorbs these traditional elements within an Augustan outlook. Thus, also in the extended proem, he refers to the Romans as a proud people (*populus superbus*) – though not before marking this people out as being a race

(*progenies*) of 'Trojan blood'.[44] And while specific *gentes* with Trojan ancestors get their moment in the narrative spotlight, as during the boat race in *Aeneid* 5, all of the Roman *gentes*, whether of Trojan lineage or not, are ultimately part of the *gens Romana*, which finds its representative backbone in the *gens Iulia*. As Anchises puts it in his survey of the *summi uiri* that form a *pompa funebris* of sorts for Augustus' nephew Marcellus (more on this below), these figures of Trojan ancestry (*Dardania proles*) and descendants of Italic stock (*Itala de gente nepotes*) will enter into 'our name' (*nostrum nomen*) – are all, in other words, *Romani uel Aeneadae* (though Virgil refrains from using this label).[45]

The connection with Troy also plays an instrumental role in how Virgil configures ethnic identity in the second half of the epic, which sets up the merging of Trojans and Latins in a melting p(l)ot that will give rise to the future Romans. As Bettini (2006) 290 puts it: [**254**]

> The Vergilian manipulation confirms the relationship between Romans and Latins through a common Trojan ancestor (who left in the Latins one part of his own physical substance, if in a lesser degree); at the same time, however, it creates between Romans and Latins an explicit hierarchy, by which the leading members are always more Trojan than the rest. In the same way, the Iulii are the most Trojan of the other families that boast a similar heritage. If the Romans and Latins are cousins descended from a common Trojan ancestor, the Romans constitute the most authentic branch of the family by far, just as the Iulii represent the Trojan ancestors in a more direct way than other groups can.

Unlike Ennius and other republican historiographers, who wrote about the *res gestae populi Romani*, Virgil's *Aeneid* tells the prehistory of the *res gestae gentis Romanae*, an ethnic entity of which Aeneas is the precursor in the legendary past and Augustus the main representative in the present. Its mission (*tu*, *Romane*, *memento*...) is the governance of an empire grounded in military prowess and a politics of peace.[46]

44 *A*. 1.19–22: *progeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci | audierat, Tyrias olim quae uerteret arces; | hinc populum late regem belloque superbum | uenturum excidio Libyae*.

45 *A*. 6.756–9.

46 *A*. 6.851–3; see Gotter 2019.

3.2 Virgil's (Partial) Destruction (and Reaffirmation) of Contingency[47]

Virgil is upfront about his investment in destiny for his configuration of history and time in the *Aeneid*. From the second line onwards, *fatum* plays a key role in the narrative. To appreciate the philosophy of history Virgil has built into his epic, of which *fatum* is only one, albeit a crucial component and which comprises not just an endorsement of (partial) predetermination but also a reassertion of free will (with tragically ironic consequences), we need to establish some general coordinates of how humans situate themselves in time with reference to supernatural forces.

Humans have only limited (if any) control over their environment and the future – though we are acutely aware of the fact that 'tomorrow' may turn out to be ghastly, especially in high-risk scenarios such as warfare. The next accident, the next human-made disaster, the next defeat in war, the next natural catastrophe is sure to happen – we just do not know when and how. To deal with this (universal) condition of contingency, many cultures posit the existence of supernatural agents or forces to whom they ascribe the ability to influence future events. If such agents are willing to engage in some form of interaction with mortals, what lies ahead becomes to some degree available to purposeful management through religious communication. And even if supernatural beings are imagined as uninterested in interacting with mortals (or as actively causing havoc in the human sphere), their existence imposes some shape upon an otherwise amorphous domain of risk and uncertainty, rendering it more intelligible if not more manageable.

[**255**] The Romans developed a belief-system predicated on the existence of divinities willing to enter into quasi-contractual relationships. In return for certain forms of religious observance, the gods of Rome's civic religion were thought to lend their support to the civic community and its representatives as they marched forward in time. To maintain good relations with the divine sphere required careful cultivation and a significant investment of time and energy, but ensured, apart from other benefits such as the reduction of anxiety and the distribution of risk, that the gods would (in all likelihood) not cause willful havoc and disaster. This condition of *pax deorum* could of course break down at any

47 This section draws on Gildenhard (2012) 279–97.

time (for instance through an involuntary slip in a ritual procedure), at which point the Roman gods tended to send warning signs that disaster was imminent; but Rome's civic religion enabled a certain amount of planning, security and risk control for those involved in managing the affairs of the commonwealth.[48] Its religious repertory even included ceremonies, which, once properly performed and executed, were thought to ensure divine support. The most striking example is *deuotio*, a ritual in which a Roman general turned himself or a fellow-citizen into a sacrificial victim of sorts before going out to meet his death in battle: *if* the ritual was flawlessly executed and *if* the dedicatee actually got himself killed, *then* the assumption was that the gods would grant victory to the Roman army. A transparent logic underwrites the transaction: in return for a truly remarkable degree of divine support in as unpredictable yet vital a situation as a battle, (someone in) the civic community had to pay the ultimate price: nothing is more costly than a human life.[49]

In his *Annals*, Ennius records instances of *deuotio* in Roman history (whether successful or not is difficult to determine) and more generally celebrates human agency in a contingent world. In his conception of history the future is open, and religious communication according to the protocols of Rome's civic religion is one way of trying to get some purchase on it. This approach chimes with the way Rome's cultural imaginary, and especially the political culture of the ruling elite, construed human agency and responsibility: a high investment in the accountability of individuals who shaped their environment according to their will, while accepting that divine forces as well as chance or luck remained important factors.

In light of all of this, Virgil's elevation of *fatum* to a key religious category might well surprise, both in terms of ideology and poetics, however reminiscent it is of Homer's *Iliad*, where the poet announces that his epic will trace the unfolding of the will of Zeus (*Il*. 1.5: Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή). During the republic, the connotations of *fatum* were almost entirely negative – a concept invoked by tyrannical powerbrokers or revolutionaries [**256**] interested in upending the status quo;[50] and positing

48 For Rome's civic religion and its underlying principles see Gildenhard (2011) 246–54, with much further bibliography, further Champion (2017).

49 For the truly remarkable cultural logic that informs the ritual of *deuotio* see Flaig (1991).

50 Gildenhard (2011) 282–5, more generally Begemann (2012).

a predetermined course of events has seemingly unwelcome consequences for our assessment of (human and divine) agency: it runs the danger of reducing characters to puppets in a preordained plot – and would seem to put paid to the efficacy of traditional religious communication. But Virgil's conception of history and religion is composite: in addition to endorsing a notion of destiny as a factor inaccessible to human and divine agents (the positive counterpart, as it were, to Sallust's chaotic *fortuna*), he retains, within parameters defined by historical necessity, a realm of contingency, the playground of the capricious divinities of Greek myth and of the literary tradition who comport themselves the way they want, without regard for human religious efforts (which generates the problem of theodicy, flagged up in the proem as a main concern of the epic).[51] He also presents us with a full apparatus of religious rituals and communicative efforts (prototypical variants, in many cases, of aspects of Rome's civic religion): his characters visit temples, invest in sacrifices and attempts to importune divinities through prayers that invoke the principle of reciprocity, in efforts to solicit divine approval for courses of action and, more generally, to divine or influence the future. This activity corresponds to the communicative overtures towards the gods a Roman magistrate would also engage in. But Virgil's narrative also routinely shows that this religious paradigm, in which human beings have the power to shape their world and their future, at least to some extent, by entering into efficacious interaction with the gods, has severe limitations within the literary universe of the *Aeneid*: the efficacy of such efforts is shown to be profoundly compromised – both by *fatum* and the unwillingness of the gods to listen and engage.

Virgil's world thus combines a significant degree of unpredictability, not least when it comes to interactions between mortals and immortals, with a significant degree of predetermination. Crucially, not all of the future is fixed; there are some aspects of Roman history, which are not foredoomed at all – a fact of which the gods are well aware. When Juno bargains with Jupiter about the terms of the *Aeneid*'s closure, for instance, she appeals to the considerable room for maneuver left open by fate as part of the negotiation (12.819: *nulla fati quod lege tenetur*). This is quite different from an effort to stop what is fated from unfolding –

51 *A.* 1.8–11.

though Juno of course does her very best to do precisely this as well. She has considerable scope to engineer disaster – though only within the parameters set by fate. The outcome of her efforts to resist and delay, if not fully derail fate, are worth twelve books of epic verse: at one level, the *Aeneid* is a chronicle of Juno's ultimately futile struggles against what has been preordained, and the story not coincidentally ends when Jupiter manages to reconcile Juno with the exigencies of fate. But in addition to allowing [**257**] for pockets of genuine contingency and temporary resistance to historical necessity, Virgil's narrative also stars a character who manages to break the laws of fate and impose her will on the world against the dictates of destiny – though it requires an extreme act of self-sacrifice: Dido.[52] The reason why it takes so long for her to die is that her suicide was not supposed to happen – the goddess of the Underworld, Proserpina, is unprepared to admit Dido to the shades below 'since she was dying not by the decree of Fate or by her own deserts but pitifully and before her time, in a sudden blaze of madness ...' (*A.* 4. 696–7: *nam quia nec fato, merita nec morte peribat,* | *sed misera ante diem subitoque accensa furore* ...).[53] It is worth tracing the trajectory that carries Dido to this point of unique empowerment.

Dido's outlook on the (literary) cosmos in which she lives develops over the course of the narrative, involving three basic stages that roughly correspond to the three sections of *Aeneid* 4 that Virgil marks with the opening phrase *at regina* (1–295, 296–503, 504–705). At the beginning, fuelled by misguided hope, Dido pursues lines of communication with the gods reminiscent of Rome's civic religion. Lines 54–64 show her visiting altars to beseech the gods, investing in repeated (and expensive) sacrifices to render them benevolent and vetting the entrails of her victims for signs of divine approval. This approval appears not to be forthcoming (which also means that the gods in charge of the signs here prove reliable and honest partners in communication): what Dido

52 In what follows, our sole focus is on the significance of Dido for Virgil's conception of history, broadly conceived. For recent scholarship on Dido that has pushed our understanding of her character farther than ever before see Schiesaro (2005a), (2008) and, for the history of her reception, Ferguson (2007).

53 We cite the translation by West (1990). Only pity on Juno's part could end her struggles, as she sends down Iris in effect to perform euthanasia, which, as an act contrary to fate, ought to have been impossible (even though Virgil, not coincidentally, here tags Juno with the epithet *omnipotens*: 693) – a deviant moment that ruptures the otherwise consistent logic of his philosophy of history.

asks for is in violation of fate, and she fatefully ignores that her way of proceeding lacks divine endorsement.

The second stage is triggered when Dido finds out that Aeneas plans to leave her. It is marked by denial, confusion and bouts of angst that gradually develop into genuine insight. Dido oscillates between mocking the notion of supernatural interference in human affairs and terror at divine signs of a dark future. Thus at *Aeneid* 4.376–80, she doubts the veracity of Aeneas' claim that he was visited by Mercury in an epiphany: *scilicet is superis labor est, ea cura quietos | sollicitat* (379–80: 'for sure, this is work for gods, this is a care to disturb their peaceful existence'). Dido here adopts a proto-Epicurean position, dismissing the idea that gods would get involved in human affairs – as opposed to enjoying an existence free of all worries. The implication is that Aeneas is a liar when he ascribes his desire to depart to the need to follow a divine command. Conversely, slightly later on Dido sees and hears portents of doom that are of supernatural (or infernal) provenance after Aeneas has refused to change his decision (*Aeneid* 4.450–55). In addition to experiencing ghastly [**258**] prodigies and unsolicited omens of doom, Dido now also recalls the many prophecies of seers of old (*multa ... uatum praedicta priorum*) which fill her with foreboding (4.464–65). In this mood of religious terror Dido resolves on suicide, setting up the final stage in her development.

From the outset, the third stage is marked by insightful determination. Now Dido has sorted through her religious confusion. Now she knows what the future holds (4.508: *haud ignara futuri*). Now Virgil calls her priestess (4.509: *sacerdos*). Now she has gained insight into the constraints that destiny imposes upon traditional cult procedures. This insight empowers. In stage two, she wished Aeneas to die in a shipwreck (4.381–4) – a futile desire since it is contrary to fate. Now she utters a curse that operates within the parameters set by historical necessity – and becomes a defining force within it (*Aeneid* 4.612–18):

> '...si tangere portus
> infandum caput ac terris adnare necesse est,
> et sic fata Iouis poscunt, hic terminus haeret,
> at bello audacis populi uexatus et armis,
> finibus extorris, complexu auulsus Iuli
> auxilium imploret uideatque indigna suorum
> funera...'

> [... If that accursed person must reach harbour and come to shore, if Jupiter's fates so demand, if the boundary stone is thus set, yet, harassed in war by people bold in arms, driven from his own land and torn from Iulus' embrace, let him plead for help and see the senseless slaughter of his people...]

Dido has now even Dido has now even grasped the fact that her earlier hope of Aeneas' dying in a shipwreck was misplaced. She has acquired a good degree of insight into what the *fata* entail. She realizes that she cannot prevent Aeneas from reaching Italy and fulfilling his destiny. But outside these basic plot patterns she feels she can reconcile at least part of what she desires with the preordained scripts of fate and contribute her share towards making Aeneas' life and the lives of his allies and descendants truly wretched. And she is right. Her curse, like that of Ariadne in Catullus 64, on which it is modeled, comes true.[54]

She also seems to understand that, in order to ensure that supernatural forces empower her curse to hit home, she needs to offer something in turn – and she is willing to give up everything she has. Invoking the underworld divinities, her suicide doubles as [**259**] a self-sacrifice along the lines of the Roman *deuotio*.[55] It thereby countersigns her curse, and in and through her death she writes herself into the destiny of Aeneas and of Rome, thereby shaping the future more powerfully than she ever did with standard prayers or sacrifices. In the end, then, Dido understands the realities of Virgil's brave new world *as they are* and becomes a frightfully efficacious agent within – and, even more shockingly, *against*

54 Dido's theological reflection remains remarkably acute right up to her suicide. At 4.651–53, in an address to the clothing Aeneas left behind, she even recognizes herself as a figure of *fortuna* and Aeneas as a figure of fate. See already 1.628–29, with its striking reminiscences of the proem: *me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores/ iactatam hac demum uoluit consistere terra*.

55 On the fundamental importance of this ritual for the narrative economy of the *Aeneid*, see Panoussi (2009). Virgil prepares for the final, climactic moments throughout Book 4. At the outset, he notes that, rather than seeking succour in conventional religious institutions and practices (*delubra*, *uota*) or tearing open the breasts of victims and inspecting animal entrails in order to figure out the future, Dido ought to consider what is eating away under her own breast, in her own innards (65–7). She herself, so Virgil intimates, is a sacrificial victim that contains within divine signs of events to come. In a prefiguration of one of the most striking religious rituals of the Roman republic, Dido finally opens *herself* up. Only at this stage, she is no longer consumed by erotic desire but lethal wrath that now spills over into the narrative.

them. Dido's relationship with Aeneas never had a future: it violated fate. But the death-scene makes clear that the affair did not *have* to end in suicide or the attending curse. Dido succeeds in carrying out a *deuotio that was not supposed to happen*!

As a result, she emerges as the most powerful agent in the poem, human or *divine*: she is the only figure who writes her own fate and, in so doing, that of countless others. She becomes a complementary force to the *fata* already written, a fatal counter-force focused on failure, which from now on haunts the story of success that destiny has in store for Aeneas and Rome. There is a fairly straightforward causality that links Dido's suicide to the death of Pallas in *Aeneid* 10, Aeneas' decision to perpetrate human sacrifice at the funeral of his surrogate son and his revenge killing of Turnus at the end of the epic (in a fit of madness that resembles the mental state of Dido when she killed herself), the ensuing 'closure' of the poem and the imaginary founding of Rome in an act of vengeful sacrificial violence, the reiteration of this scenario in a fratricidal key with Romulus and Remus, the long series of external conflicts within Italy and beyond (with a special focus on Hannibal), and the decades of self-laceration that ripped apart the innards of Roman culture and society in suicidal violence during the last centuries of the republic:[56] all of it can be traced back – within the logic of Virgil's (literary) cosmos – to Dido's devotional suicide that empowers her curse.[57] In that fateful instant the most radical kind of surprise [**260**] contingency detonates in Virgil's narrative: 'the poet himself seems to grant to this one character at this one moment an agency that creates a kind of rift in the poem's ideological fabric. The rift is a mystery the poem leaves unexplained.'[58] In *Aeneid* 4 Virgil construes a shocking moment when

56 The idiom of self-impalement that Anchises employs to address the souls of Caesar and Pompey in *Aeneid* 6 (833: ... *neu patriae ualidas in uiscera uertite uiris*) picks up on what Dido does to herself at the end of *Aeneid* 4.

57 See in more detail Gildenhard and Henderson (2018) 255–60, with further literature. There is a similar link between the efficaciousness of malediction and the sacrificial death of the one who utters the imprecation in Catullus 64. See Armstrong (2006a) 212: 'Ariadne addresses the Furies as Eumenides, a title which perhaps brings to mind the goddesses' Athenian affiliations: the heroine's prayer is directed to upholders of justice under the name associated with the offender's home city. Moreover, these goddesses have a role in upholding promises, but they are also, more famously, employed to pursue murderers. It is almost as if Ariadne is dead already, and her ghost, like Clytemnestra's, is calling on the goddesses not to allow her demise to go unnoticed.'

58 Ferguson (2007) 2.

the religious coordinates of his literary cosmos experience inexplicable rupture – when a character manages to do something against fate, with prodigious consequences: this instance of defiant 'human departure from a foreordained historical narrative' (Ferguson 2007: 2) becomes itself a negative force in history from which there is no escape: in the form of her curse, it will dog Aeneas and his people from now on.

The degree of power that Virgil grants to Dido in his epic world – and, in its aetiological implications, Roman history in general – is truly formidable, yet not always fully appreciated. Lovatt (2013) 12 notes perceptively that 'Dido desires to become part of the story, like the women on the walls who fall in love with the warriors they watch', yet feels that 'becoming part of the story is a step too far for femininity, a step from epic into tragedy, across the boundaries of genre' (ibid.). But Dido becomes very much part of the story: she is the curse to Aeneas' glory, the yang to his yin, the tragedy to his epic, the dark matter in his universe. It is a disagreeable space to occupy – and the overall design feeds right into the *Aeneid*'s sexist binaries; but part of the story she becomes – ineluctably. She begins as a figure of *fortuna* and counterfactual desires; yet at the end, 'Dido's nostalgia for the impossible' (Schiesaro 2005a: 106) is transformed into agency. She makes the (seemingly) impossible possible – and in so doing becomes a fateful force herself.[59] Together with *fatum*, Dido and her curse reside at the very centre of Virgil's conception of history. She embodies (and entails) the tragedies that complement Aeneas' triumphs. And (unlike the destined plot of fate) none of her tragedy (and the tragedies her curse causes down to contemporary times) *had* to happen according to Virgil: this is *his*-story![60] If Homer, in the *Iliad*, traces the realization of the will of Zeus (only), in Virgil's *Aeneid* the unfolding of fate is only part of the story – the other part consists of the contingent meddling of

59 Schiesaro also argues that this nostalgia 'is at the root of an unsurpassed emotional and poetic appeal which goes well beyond romantic sympathy for a deceived love heroine', giving voice 'to a radically alternative worldview, dominated by instinctual drives which stubbornly refuse to accept the dictates of logos and history' (2005a: 106). We would subscribe to this, but add that in the end Dido re-enfranchises herself by accepting the dictates of logos and history and then bending them to her will, within the (understood) limits of what is feasible. Virgil takes his narrative to Carthage to take her-story on board: she becomes part of logos, part of his-tory.

60 The meeting of Dido and Aeneas, or at least their love affair, seems to have been Virgil's invention, though some elements of the story may already have been in Naevius. See Horsfall (1973–74) and Hexter (1992) for discussion.

two goddesses who, in the realm of aetiological 'faction' that is [**261**] Virgil's Carthage, inadvertently push a mortal woman into becoming a catalyst of doom within his (literary) universe – and beyond.

In Dido's Carthage the counterfactual becomes reality and a once possible reality becomes counterfactual: given that both Dido's suicide and its consequences were *not* preordained, but ended up 'enriching' the story of Aeneas (and Roman history more generally) with a vast amount of (unnecessary) bloodshed and suffering, Virgil invites his readers to imagine a history of Rome not messed up by Juno, Venus, Dido and Aeneas, a history without the deaths of Pallas and Turnus, without Hannibal, without fratricide or civil war. In the world of the *Aeneid*, the triumphant version of Roman history is prescripted, firmly in place, always already determined by fate; the rest is not, or at least not initially – it becomes fixed as the epic unfolds, in response to the actions and decisions of individual agents (human and divine). And the history that Virgil shows us in the making is a history of disaster, of unintended consequences, of emotions running riot, of extreme (speech) acts and of tragic irony (not least – indeed, above all – on the divine level). In his conception of (Roman) history, Virgil imbricates predetermination and free will that, in its most extreme form, is able to empower itself to the level of a fateful force in its own right, using a (perverse) prototype of one of the most remarkable rituals of Rome's civic religion to endow the construct with credibility, in the attempt to offer an aetiology of *all* of Roman history – its (fated) triumphs and its (accursed) tragedies. After his pit-stop in Carthage, Aeneas carries a dual destiny, consisting of two countervailing scripts, one of cosmos, one of chaos, running in parallel down the course of Roman history to Augustus and his age (and beyond?).

An important inspiration for Virgil's rendezvous with tragedy in the *Aeneid* is Catullus – whose tragic vision proves even more fundamental for Virgil's conception of history than his (extensive) dialogue with actual tragic plays, Greek or Roman – and certainly constitutes a privileged point of reference since the Eclogues.[61] All of Catullus' *carmina maiora*

61 On Virgil and Catullus (not least the link between Ariadne and Dido) see e.g. Abel (1962), Oksala (1962), Kilroy (1969), Clausen (1987) 40–60, O'Hara (1990) 44–48, Wills (1996) 26–30, Armstrong (2006b) 153–6, Nappa (2007) 382–6, Hardie (2012), Trimble (2013), Putnam (2016).

are scripted into the Dido affair – and in particular *c.* 64 and *c.* 66.[62] Dido initially desires to put her relationship with Aeneas on a trajectory that resembles the plot of *c.* 61. Yet instead of a wedding celebration, marital bliss, successful pregnancy and birth of a *paruulus Aeneas* (cf. her wish at 4.328–9), the equivalent of *Torquatus … paruulus* (61.209), we get a replay of the story Catullus tells in c. 62–8, involving non-reproductive sex, the reduction of Aeneas to an Attis figure (emasculated and enslaved to an Eastern Queen), delusion and abandonment. For our purposes, the most significant Catullan presence in [**262**] the Dido interlude is the figure of Ariadne in *c.* 64. Yes, Dido is Medea and Procne and Agave in her desire to commit infanticide and *sparagmos* (see 4.600–2; though unlike her intertextual alter egos she does not succeed, at least not initially); and yes, she is Ajax in stabbing herself to death and then giving Aeneas the silent treatment in the underworld – as well as refracting a host of other characters from Greek and Latin literature in Virgil's allusive mirror cabinet.[63] But Ariadne, in her Catullan incarnation, trumps them all, insofar as she offers the most striking parallels in terms of plot: as an abandoned woman turning into an enraged maenad and sending an efficacious curse after the hero who betrayed her, no other tragic figure matches her importance. In Carthage, Aeneas, on his way from Troy to Rome, takes a significant element of Catullus' universal history of doom (which, as we have seen, itself culminates in the eternal city) on board.

3.3 Virgil's Destruction of the Future

The *Aeneid* seemingly lacks definitive closure: Virgil leaves the end deliberately open, shutting the narrative down with the reluctant departure of Turnus' soul to the shades below. The moment, however, is a well-chosen caesura: after Aeneas' triumph over his rival, Virgil's aetiology is complete: the rest is (Roman) history, all aetiologically prefigured somewhere in the preceding books. The very end (to pick out just one major theme) projects an image of unity founded in

62 For the sequence of allusion to *c.* 66 in the Dido narrative see Essay 3 'Allusion' 55–61, with reference to further literature.

63 For a survey of the intertextual economy of the Dido episode, see Essay 3 'Allusion', with further bibliography.

bloodshed, a notion of national identity conceived in violent conflict, and Rome's future will feature many an analogical rerun of this final moment of foundational violence – from Romulus' fratricide to the showdown between Antony and Augustus at Actium. The fact that the narrative of the *Aeneid* aetiologically anticipates all of Roman history reveals the apparent open-endedness of the epic as ultimately false: the continuation of the *Aeneid* has already happened within the narrative itself, in particular in the teleological vectors that Virgil sketches in the three long prophecies of Books 1, 6 and 8. Far from opening out and handing over to a rival poet (as does the *Iliad*) or being inconclusive (as is the *Odyssey*), the literary-historical cosmos of the *Aeneid* is exclusive and totalising, with a *telos* clearly articulated in the narrative: Virgil's own time, i.e. the *aetas* of himself and Augustus, which he invokes in images of spatiotemporal universals at key moments throughout the poem. Rome has now become coextensive with the universe: its empire (of peace) stretches across the entire world and is without end (*sine fine*) in either time or space.[64] Virgil, then, leaves the end deliberately open, but in such a way that the completion of the story is found nowhere else but within the self-enclosed historical vision of the poem.[65]

[**263**] But whereas the historical visions of Book 1 and 8, which end, respectively, with images of Augustus' 'triumph' over Parthia in 21 BCE and the triple triumph he celebrated after Actium in 29 BCE, are triumphalist in spirit, that of Book 6, situated at the very centre of the epic, is not. Anchises ends his survey of future *summi uiri* in lament for the premature death of a boy: Marcellus, the nephew of Augustus, son of his sister Octavia, and at the time of his death in 23 BCE, the heir apparent of the *princeps*.[66] Here, at the very centre of the epic, the *Aeneid*'s 'ideology of timelessness' (Hardie 1997: 141) acquires a tragic poignancy: it coincides with the death of the future. From an aesthetic point of view this construction provides a satisfying point of closure; moreover, it resonates with new Augustan landmarks in the cityscape of Rome. Just

64 See esp. *A.* 1.279–96, 6.851–3, 8.97–101, 626–728.

65 Hardie (1997) 139.

66 For Augustus' dynastic planning from early on see the nuanced discussion of Stevenson (2013), who of course realises that the promotion of heritable autocracy clashes with the conceit of the principate as a restoration or continuation of republican traditions – a circle that Augustan ideology was designed (and managed) to square.

as the opening of Book 6 gestures to the triumphant temple of Apollo on the Palatine Hill, so the ending invokes the Mausoleum of Augustus and its first, tragically young, inhabitant Marcellus.[67] At the centre of his epic, Virgil transforms the stroke of misfortune that put paid to Augustus' initial efforts to groom an heir into a central building block of his ideology of timelessness – the idea that history has come to a conclusive end with Augustus. The premature death of Marcellus enabled Virgil to sidestep the – aesthetically and politically – thorny issue of dynastic succession: it is not a problem that his epic, and the conception of history embedded therein, needed to explore further, even though the question of what would happen after the death of the first *princeps* remained a live-wire issue throughout Augustus' years in power.

The problem that Cicero presciently formulated towards the end of the *pro Marcello* (22–5) – that a *res publica* whose stability depends entirely on the life of one fragile mortal is precarious – continued to haunt Rome until the first successful succession, which demonstrated that the autocratic system of government had 'bedded down' and was generally accepted, even if individual *principes* were not.[68] Indeed, the phenomenon of *immatura mors* – both of Augustus himself, through sickness or conspiracy, and various of his prospective heirs – constituted a major source of contingency throughout his reign.[69] As the death of Marcellus tragically demonstrated, even the best-laid plans for dynastic succession could be set at naught by random bad luck. Apotropaic gestures to obviate the [**264**] premature death of the *princeps* abound in Augustan poetry:[70] 'Few things undermine authority as much as the prospect that its bearer will soon be gone, and his regime with him.'[71] '... salvation hung upon a single thread. Well might men adjure the gods of Rome to preserve that precious life ...'[72] The sense of closure that Virgil configures at the centre of his epic, then, is more final than the *princeps* will have

67 See *A*. 6.874: *tumulum ... recentem*. For discussion see e.g. Harrison (2006) 167–9 and Wallis (2018) 178–9. For the Mausoleum (begun in 28 BCE) see Hesberg (1996).

68 On the principate as an 'Akzeptanzsystem', see Flaig (1992).

69 On *mors immatura* see Martin-Kilcher (2000).

70 See e.g. Hor. *Carm*. 1.2.45, Prop. 3.11.50, Ov. *Met*. 15.868–70, further Nisbet and Hubbard (1970) 37, who identify the theme as belonging to 'conventional panegyric', which does not diminish its urgency and relevance, not least because 'the Princeps was often ill'.

71 Powell (2013) 186.

72 Syme (1939) 304 (cited by Powell 2013: 197, n. 28).

wanted, however much Virgil uses the end of *Aeneid* 6 to advertise key elements of Augustan ideology, not least the autocratic reconfiguration and absorption of gentilician *memoria* within the *gens Iulia*, in the name of Rome: it is the most poignant illustration of the fact that in the self-enclosed literary universe of the *Aeneid* the future is already past.

Dido is unable to kill off Rome's future: Aeneas' son Ascanius (Iulus) is beyond the reach of her wrath, ensuring the survival of the lineage that leads from Venus to Rome, from Anchises and Aeneas to Augustus. She has to settle for a curse that, among others, destroys a substitute, Aeneas' surrogate son Pallas. Nor does Virgil explicitly link the death of Marcellus to Dido's curse, which elsewhere in the poem, notably in the historical panorama on the shield of Vulcan, with Augustus' double victory over Antony and Cleopatra at Actium at its centre, seems to have run its course in Virgil's present. Anchises at any rate ascribes the tragically early death of Marcellus to a sort of cosmic balance, viz. the need to impose some limit on Roman power, preordained by the harsh bonds of fate (869: *fata*, 882: *fata aspera*) and overseen by the gods above (871: *superi*). And yet the parallels with Pallas, whom Virgil does mark out as a victim of Dido's curse, are unmistakable.[73] And both belong to the large set of youthful figures who suffer a premature death in Virgil's narrative, including Icarus, Euryalus, Lausus, Camilla and Turnus. The one notable exception of a strapping, ambitious young man escaping doom is Ascanius/Iulus (Pallas dies in his stead). He, however, prefigures, genealogically as well as analogically, Marcellus, who unites the figures of Iulus and Pallas, Aeneas' actual and surrogate son, in one.[74]

The deaths of these figures, and in particular Euryalus, Pallas and Marcellus, mark heightened moments of tragic pathos in Virgil's narrative, which he allusively tinges with [**265**] a Catullan sense of sadness and aesthetic sensibility.[75] In Virgil, Troy is no longer simply a

73 Turnus' slaughter of Pallas, the son of Evander and surrogate son of Aeneas, sets up, of course, the Didoesque and Junoesque final scene of the epic. As Dido herself promises at 4.384–6, *sequar atris ignibus absens | ... et ... | omnibus umbra locis adero*. Her ghost haunts Aeneas and the Aeneadae forever after: there is no happy end.

74 Cf. Wallis (2018) 178–9, who notes (n. 41) that 'Anchises' references to Marcellus as a "boy of the Trojan race" (*puer Iliaca ... de gente*, 6.875) and vividly as his "grandson" (*nepotis*, 6.884) serve to link Marcellus' unrivalled potential with that of Iulus himself'. On Ascanius (and the future he symbolises) see now Rogerson (2017).

75 On the Catullan aesthetics of 'death-floration' in the *Aeneid* see most recently Gildenhard and Henderson (2018) 17–21, 247–50 with further bibliography.

site of death; the Roman phoenix will rise from the city's ashes. What Troy is for Catullus, Carthage is for Virgil: the place of tragic entropy. In that sense the *Aeneid* co-opts and corrects the universal history of *c*. 64, with its unremitting darkness. In the *Aeneid*, darkness *and* light are visible. And yet, despite the fact that the location of doom has shifted, Virgil makes the aesthetics of pathos and the tragic ideology of Catullus part of his own historical vision. As integral components of his encyclopedic aetiology these elements offer a provocative counter-mood to epic triumphalism and enshrine some distinctively Catullan values and experiences in the text – such as lyric beauty, the power of poetry, the ephemeral nature of youth, the woes of premature death, the allures of Greek culture and innocence despoiled.

4 Tacitus: (Trojan) Rome May Burn; Republican Annals Last[76]

If Virgil's *Aeneid* turns Rome's Trojan past into epic orthodoxy for the Roman people, linking the mythic origins of Rome in Troy to a world-historical destiny that culminates in the age of Augustus, Tacitus, in his two major works of historiography penned under the principate of Trajan, rewrites this plot by construing the recent imperial past as an aberration with dire consequences for Rome's political (and literary) culture. He approaches his task in inverse chronological order: in the Histories, he revisits the year of the four emperors and the rise and fall of the Flavian dynasty (69 –96 CE); in the subsequent *Annals*, he covers the period from the death of the first to the death of the last of the Julio-Claudian emperors, that is, Augustus to Nero (14–68 CE).[77] Augustan poets, in particular Virgil, are interlocutors throughout, already in the *Histories*, as he radically re-evaluates what the end of (republican) history occasioned by Augustus actually means (not least for historiography): not the end of civil strife and

76 This section draws on Owen and Gildenhard (2013).

77 In the one manuscript that preserved the opening books of the *Annals* the text is presented under the title *Ab excessu diui Augusti*. Our conventional label *Annals* has therefore 'no ancient authority', but it is nevertheless 'a happy choice in that it reminds the reader that Tacitus, most original of Roman historians, wrote within the traditional framework of year-by-year narrative': Martin (1981) 104. Tacitus himself refers to 'the Annals' as 'his annals' at *Annals* 4.32.1, much like Livy 43.13.2 (*meos annales*).

a new imperial beginning, but the (temporary) termination of freedom, truth and eloquence.[78] This onslaught on Augustan history, and dynastic-imperial history more generally, which comes out with particular force in the proems to the *Histories* (4.1) and the *Annals* (4.2), also includes an aggressive engagement with the myth of Troy as a foundational element of Augustan [**266**] ideology: at the end of the *Annals*, under the last of the Julio-Claudian emperors, Rome experiences an apocalyptic return to its Trojan origins (4.3).

4.1 Histories 1.1

The opening paragraph of the *Histories* contains Tacitus' most detailed self-positioning as a writer of history. Consisting in equal measure of polemics and apologia, it carves out a space for his authorial voice and literary project within Roman history, Rome's historiographical traditions and the contemporary field of power. The opening sentence – *Initium mihi operis Seruius Galba iterum Titus Vinius consules erunt*: 'I begin my work with the second consulship of Servius Galba, when Titus Vinius was his colleague' – already articulates the polemic edge of his historical vision with methodical precision, not so much for what it says but what it passes over in silence. At the beginning of 69 CE, when Tacitus begins his *Histories*, Galba was not just consul for the second time; he was also emperor. As Nero's successor he had already been in power since 6 June 68. Tacitus blithely glosses over this seemingly salient fact, preferring instead to give a historiographical shout-out to Galba in his role as 'republican' high magistrate. This programmatic keynote sets the tone for the rest of the work – and the remainder of the opening paragraph, where Tacitus takes his readers on a flash journey through Roman history, from the foundations of Rome way back when down to his own times, with Actium and Augustus, 69 CE (the year of the four emperors) and the Flavian dynasty as major pit stops. Onto this chronological skeleton, he hangs systematic comments on the (changing) political regimes, which he matches to the (changing) outlook of Latin historiography. His basic thesis of an inextricable link between the political environment and the quality of writing it sponsors raises some awkward questions about his

78 For Tacitus and Virgil see e.g. Schmaus (1887), Baxter (1971), (1972), Benario (1972), Miller (1986), Henry (1991), Keitel (2008), Joseph (2010), (2012).

own literary efforts. Tacitus confronts this challenge head-on by scripting a mini autobiography into his opening salvo that outlines his political career and his approach to historical writing. If we extract the information Tacitus has packed into his opening paragraph and present it in the form of a table the result is as follows:[79] [**267**]

Period	**Regime/ emperor in charge**	**Characteristics**	**The quality of historiography and historians**	**Tacitus (54/56–*c.* 120)**	**Tacitus' historiographical writings**
751–31 BCE [founding of Rome – Actium]	*res populi Romani**	*libertas, eloquentia, ueritas*	Very high: cf. *magna ingenia*	Before his birth	
30 BCE–68 CE [Augustus – Nero]	Julio-Claudian dynasty	- *ueritas infracta* - *libido adsentandi* - *odium aduersus dominantes*	Rather low, falling into two flawed types: one motivated by hatred; the other by subservience: neither cares for posterity *ambitio scriptoris* (a turn-off) *obtrectatio et liuor* (lurid fascination)	Before his birth; childhood	(to be covered later, in the *Annals*)
69 CE [The year of the four emperors]	Galba, Otho, Vitellius; Vespasian	? Ditto ?	? Ditto ?	*mihi Galba Otho Vitellius nec beneficio nec iniuria cogniti*;	*Histories* 1–3
69–96 [Vespasian – Domitian]	Flavian dynasty: Vespasian (69–79) Titus (79–81) Domitian (81–96)	? Ditto ?	? Ditto ?	Stellar public career (cf. *dignitas nostra*); this won't compromise his commitment to *incorrupta fides* and absence of *amor* and *odium* in his writings	*Hist*. 4 (21 December 69–1 January 70), beginning of 5 (70); the rest of the work is lost, but covered events till the death of Domitian

79 For further discussion see e.g. Cole (1992), Marincola (1999), Damon (2003).

Period	Regime/ emperor in charge	Characteristics	The quality of historiography and historians	Tacitus (54/56–*c.* 120)	Tacitus' historiographical writings
96–	'Adopted emperors': Nerva (96–98), Trajan (98–117), Hadrian (117–138)	*uberior securiorque materia; rara temporum felicitas;* freedom of thought and speech	Tacitus seems to imply that the political situation enables: *ueritas libertas eloquentia.* This would seem to entail that Tacitus could be a *magnum ingenium* in the republican mould.	? What was/ is his status/ career under Nerva and Trajan? Looking towards the future: retirement (*senectus*)	Writing about this period a task for retirement

* Unlike the opening of the *Annals* (for which see below), Tacitus here glosses over the fact that initially Rome was ruled by kings, in the process playing down the traditional assumption that primeval monarchy was simply 'natural'.

[**268**] In a minimal amount of space, Tacitus manages to correlate three different histories: the history of Rome, the history of Roman historiography and his own personal history.[80] In his history of Rome and of Roman historiography, Tacitus posits two key watersheds: 31 BCE and 96 CE.[81] A tripartite pattern emerges: in republican times, the political setup enabled outstanding authors to flourish. By contrast, the period from Actium until the death of Domitian, dominated as it was by the Julio-Claudian and Flavian dynasties, did not allow literary talent to thrive: the lack of *libertas* in Roman politics compromised historical works written during this period. The return of *libertas* in the wake of Domitian's assassination and the rise to power of a new type of *princeps* committed to republican norms, however, restored the conditions necessary for the composition of superlative historiography, pre-eminent for its truth (*ueritas*) and beauty (*eloquentia*). Anyone writing history in the present – such as Tacitus – could therefore realise the full potential of his talent and perhaps join the company of the *magna ingenia*

80 In view of the means available to a *homo nouus*, Tacitus had an impressive senatorial career under three different *principes* – a career that was crowned with his assignment, under Trajan, to the proconsulship of Asia, one of the most prestigious posts in the high empire, in 112–13 CE.

81 On the 'qualitative contrast between historiography before and after Actium' and the associated textual issues we follow Cole (1992) 233–5.

of old. Under Nerva and Trajan, the conditions for truly outstanding historiography are again in place, and Tacitus implies that he will make the most of it – with one significant qualification: for the time being, his eyes are firmly trained on the past; what he intends to write is a pre-history of the present; a history of the present, on the other hand, is explicitly set aside as a task for the future.[82] Tacitus' response to the problem (entirely of his own making) of how to restore greatness to the genre thus combines reference to external circumstances (the adoptive principate ushered in by Nerva) with personal choices to do with subject matter (his refusal to eulogise the present explicitly: he prefers instead to do so by blackening the past). The result is the work itself, the *Histories*: an apparent monument of and to eloquent truth-telling about history enabled by political freedom.

Implicitly, the very act of writing historiography promotes the current regime over the previous one, which, according to the Tacitus of the *Agricola*, laid waste to literary culture more generally.[83] In terms of both content and form, Tacitus' *Histories* (and *Annals*) evoke the world of republican Rome, or more specifically the world of the *libera res publica*. The commitment to *libertas* on the part of the author (which stands in striking contrast to the enslavement and servility of the senatorial elite he chronicles on the level of plot) finds its most appropriate generic articulation in his decision to write a variant of annalistic historiography. The very design of his narratives reaffirms this quintessentially republican [**269**] way of representing history. His foregrounding of Galba's republican magistracy in the opening sentence arguably constitutes a programmatic recognition that his reign represents a false start back to the future – a return, that is, to a quasi-republican mode of imperial rule that will come into being with Nerva and Trajan, namely the adoptive emperorship. According to Tacitus, Galba already tried to break with the dynastic principle of adopting within the family by choosing his heir apparent Piso from the entire commonwealth, operating according to the (republican) principle of merit.[84] In the very first chapter of the *Histories*, Tacitus implicitly identifies the successful

82 See Biesinger 2019.
83 Tac. *Agr*. 3, 44. See Geisthardt (2015).
84 *Hist*. 1.15.2 (Galba speaking, about his adoption of Piso): *sed Augustus in domo successorem quaesiuit, ego in re publica*.

implementation of this principle as the most significant watershed in Roman history (and historiography) since Actium, entailing a return to a quasi-republican regime marked by *libertas*, which forms the enabling matrix for his historiographical efforts to outshine all others.

4.2 Annals 1.1

As in the *Histories*, Tacitus uses the opening paragraph of the *Annals* for a grand sweep through Roman history from the very beginning down to imperial times (*Ann*. 1.1):

> Vrbem Romam a principio reges habuere; libertatem et consulatum L. Brutus instituit. dictaturae ad tempus sumebantur; neque decemuiralis potestas ultra biennium, neque tribunorum militum consulare ius diu ualuit. non Cinnae, non Sullae longa dominatio; et Pompei Crassique potentia cito in Caesarem, Lepidi atque Antonii arma in *Augustum* cessere, qui cuncta discordiis ciuilibus fessa nomine principis sub imperium accepit. sed ueteris populi Romani prospera uel aduersa claris scriptoribus memorata sunt; temporibusque *Augusti* dicendis non defuere decora ingenia, donec gliscente adulatione deterrerentur. Tiberii Gaique et Claudii ac Neronis res florentibus ipsis ob metum falsae, postquam occiderant, recentibus odiis compositae sunt. inde consilium mihi pauca de *Augusto* et extrema tradere, mox Tiberii principatum et cetera, sine ira et studio, quorum causas procul habeo.
>
> [At the beginning kings ruled the city of Rome: liberty and the consulate were set up by Brutus. Dictatorships were resorted to from time to time: the decemviral office did not extend beyond two years, nor did the consular power of the military tribunes last long. The despotic rule of neither Cinna nor Sulla went on for long: the power of Pompey and Crassus quickly came to rest in Caesar, the military might of Lepidus and Antony in *Augustus*, who, under the name of 'princeps', gathered beneath his power all matters outworn by civil conflicts. But the successes and disasters of the Roman people of old have been commemorated by famous authors, and talents of distinction were not lacking

> to tell about the times of *Augustus*, until they were deterred by increasing sycophancy. The deeds of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and [**270**] Nero were falsified through fear while they were alive, and written down, after their deaths, with hatreds still rankling. Hence my intent to cover a small part (the final years) of *Augustus*, then the principate of Tiberius and the rest, without anger and partisanship, for which I have no motive.]

As in the *Histories*, Tacitus stakes a claim to superiority over previous accounts: his history of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, written in retrospect, promises to surpass earlier, contemporary sources in veracity by virtue of his dispassionate handling of the subject matter. Yet there are also notable differences to the proem of his earlier work. Tacitus limits the autobiographical element to the obvious point of historical distance between himself and his new subject, in line with the reduced need for auto-apologetic authorial self-fashioning. He also makes no reference to the historical circumstances under which he is writing – or to a future work about the current regime. In his account of Roman history, he again presents a tripartite scheme, with two watersheds, but configures it differently from the *Histories*: he now recognises the royal period in its own right and identifies the expulsion of the kings by Brutus and the establishment of republican *libertas* as the first main caesura; the second is Augustus, who re-establishes monarchy in Rome. Thus, where the preface of the *Histories* moved from *libertas* to autocracy and back to *libertas*, the preface of the *Annals* moves from autocracy to *libertas* back to autocracy. As in the *Histories*, Tacitus firmly links outstanding historiography to conditions of political liberty, though he no longer invokes a specific watershed event (Actium), but diagnoses a general decline setting in under Augustus. In this connection, the moment Tacitus has chosen for the start of his own narrative – the end of Augustus' reign and the succession of Tiberius – is pointed: the Tiberian accession involved the transmission of power from one ruler to another and hence signaled irrevocably the end of the republican tradition of senatorial government. With the second *princeps*, the monarchic outlook of the principate established by Augustus acquired an additional dynastic reality. Not coincidentally, Tiberius' reign is marked by the absence of *libertas*. To be sure, there are some manifestations of senatorial *libertas* even under the successor of Augustus (cf. 1.74.2), but its continuing

existence is nothing more than an occasional flicker, designed to make readers realise the lack of genuine *libertas*. The absence of senatorial freedom becomes a general feature in the Tacitean presentation of the Julio-Claudian principate.

Given that the *Annals* chronicle the decline and fall of the Julio-Claudian dynasty from Tiberius onwards, the overpowering importance Augustus assumes in the opening paragraph is striking – he is mentioned by name no fewer than three times – and worth a more detailed look, not least since Tacitus construes the (Augustan) principate and the practice of truthful historiography as mutually exclusive, which raises the question whether (and if so why) he is able to write quality history himself. The answer [**271**] to this question requires consideration of how Tacitus configures the role of Augustus in relation to Trajan, that is, the *princeps* in power at the time when he wrote the *Annals*.

The abrupt beginning *Vrbem Romam a principio reges habuere* signals Tacitus' commitment to what some would consider the only proper subject of Roman historiography: the city of Rome (and one may add: its history). But, in what is a typical feature of Tacitean style, his syntax is at variance with his theme. For the subject of his narrative here features as the grammatical object: initially, the *urbs* was in the possession of the Roman kings. The elevation of the kings to pole-position in his narrative, however, is as programmatic as it is fleeting: Tacitus deals with their reign over Rome in six brief words, which gesture to Sallust: 'the famous first sentence of Tacitus' *Annals*...alludes simultaneously and unmistakably to two of the prefaces of Sallust: *Bellum Catilinae* 6.1 "*Urbem Romam ... habuere* initio Troiani" (the introduction to Sallust's account of early republican history), and *Histories* 1.8 "*a principio* urbis".'[85] By alluding to *Cat*. 6.1 but substituting *reges* for *Troiani*, Tacitus both recognises and effaces the Trojan ancestry of the Julio-Claudian *gens*, whose dynasty he is about to chronicle, and, conversely, yokes the Trojans to autocracy, in

85 Woodman (1988) 167–8. Some scholars have also read the opening sentence as a (flawed) hexameter, invoking epic poetry, with the flaw arguably as important as the invocation, to distinguish his own prose from other generic options and to dismiss (flawless) epic as eulogistically compromised; the metrics perhaps also gesture to Augustus' *Res Gestae* if one follows Koster (1978) in reconstructing the heading of the Roman archetype as follows: *Rerum gestarum | diui Augusti, | quibus orbem || terrarum imperio | populi Romani subiecit et impensarum, quas in rem publicam populumque Romanum fecit, index*. The sentence scans hexametrically until *populi* (with caesuras marked by '|' and verse break by '||').

what will turn out to be a programmatic keynote.

The first sentence is a mere statement. But the antithesis that follows in asyndeton – *libertatem et consulatum L. Brutus instituit* – labels the time of the kings for what it was: a life without freedom for the Roman people. In contrast to being the possession of someone, like the city of Rome in the first sentence, the objects of the second sentence *libertatem et consulatum* (which are syntactically parallel to *urbem Romam*) are the results of a process carried out by Lucius Brutus and represent the main constituents of the Roman republic. In Tacitus' subsequent sweep down the course of Roman history these republican principles are initially only suspended if need be and exclusively in a legal way (*potestas*; *ius*). It is with Cinna and Sulla that the pursuit of illegitimate power (*dominatio*) begins, which in the course of two tricola of military commanders – actually the members of the two triumvirates of the late republic – culminates in Augustus, who subdues and subsumes everything under his power, *nomine principis*.[86] This phrase, which might be glossed 'under the (false) name of *princeps*',[87] refers to the ideological terms [**272**] used to disguise his illegitimate power and also gestures back to the *a principio* in the first sentence: it leaves no doubt that the circumstances that applied under the kings have returned with the Augustan usurpation. The circle of history is closed and the distinctive features of Roman republican society, *libertas et consulatus*, are gone. Hence with regard to Roman history, Augustus represents the exact opposite of L. Brutus. Just as the latter installed *libertas et consulatus* through an act of violence, so Augustus eliminates these principles of the republic by force of arms.

In what follows, Tacitus describes the history of Roman historiography. This literary genre belongs among the social practices cultivated by the senatorial elite and, as Tacitus points out, has its beginnings in the times of republican *libertas*. In the atmosphere of freedom *clari scriptores* emerged and dedicated themselves to passing on the *prospera uel aduersa* of the Roman people. Precisely because they excelled in this task, Tacitus is able to limit his account of the old times to the opening paragraph. And even in the times of Augustus, he continues, there were able

86 On Roman terms for power see Gotter (2008).

87 See *OLD* 15a: 'a name used to disguise the true nature of a person or thing; esp. *–ine* or *per nomen* + gen., in the guise or assumed character (of)'. We are grateful to Andrew Dyck for drawing our attention to this detail.

historians to record noteworthy events. There is a problem, however: the phrase *temporibusque Augusti dicendis* not only links this whole era to one person and thus functions again as a reminder of the abolished republican order; it also insinuates that the subjects of historiography that would be most worthwhile for the *decora ingenia* are – perversely, from a republican point of view – the *res gestae* of Augustus. That seems to imply that even the famous writers during the reign of Augustus are hopelessly compromised: the first *princeps* functions like a black hole that sucks in, deforms and re-centres all of history on his own person: there is no possibility of escape from his baleful influence. From this point of view, even the accounts of those 'shining' talents, those *decora ingenia* who turned their minds to historiography, begin to lose lustre.

Moreover, the conjunction *donec* implies that these historians gradually disappeared – and were gone at just about the same moment when Tacitus begins his own narrative, towards the end of Augustus' reign. (The desire for seamless coverage, the living *decorum ingenium* picking up exactly where the *decora ingenia* of old left off, might account for the switch from a clear caesura, i.e. Actium, in the *Histories* to the idea of gradual decline in the *Annals*, which is conceptually unsatisfying, especially in light of the proem to the *Histories*, and otherwise difficult to explain.) Certainly by the reigns of Tiberius and his successors great historiography had gone the same way as the republic and *libertas*. The genre was debased by flattery, fear or hatred. This detestable condition is said to have lasted steadily until the end of Nero's reign. In the preface to the *Annals*, then, the first *princeps* sounds the death knell of a republican form of both government and historiography. The two are linked with each other inasmuch as *libertas* constitutes the *sine qua non* for truthful historical accounts. In the narrative of Tacitus' proem, Augustus is the beginning of an inevitable end for these two constituent features of republican life. [**273**]

As the preface to the *Histories*, so also that to the *Annals* raises the question of how Tacitus can plausibly exempt himself from the wholesale indictment of his profession. In other words, wherein lies the difference between him and his imperial predecessors and what does this difference tell us about the quality of Tacitus' historiography, his assessment of the sociopolitical circumstances in which he operated and the role he implicitly ascribes to Trajan?

To begin with, his negative assessment of historiography on the Julio-Claudian dynasty justifies his own literary project. In contrast to his predecessors, Tacitus claims to have written a true record, in the absence of *ira* and *studium*. This of course implies that all previous historiography about the Julio-Claudians is untrustworthy, that is, not only the works written under the reigns of Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius and Nero, but also those produced in Flavian times. As the preface to the *Histories* makes clear, this period was not conducive to the production of historiography *sine ira et studio*, which explains why Tacitus' retrospective history becomes desirable: only now, so the implied argument goes, has it become possible to compose an account of the Julio-Claudian dynasty that meets the highest standards. Thus the history of Rome and the history of Roman historiography as depicted by Tacitus point to his own age.

But what are we to make of his claim that unlike any of his imperial predecessors his record is truthful because he is free of hatred and neither flattery nor fear compels him to write a distorted account? We can either suppose that Tacitus conceived of himself as the most autonomous senator (the unique exception) in all of Roman history under the *principes* or assume that he attributes the reason for his ability to excel to external circumstances as he implied in the preface to his *Histories*. The two factors are clearly not mutually exclusive; and if both are in play in Tacitus' authorial self-fashioning, what he wrote in the preface to his *Histories* also holds true for the *Annals*, namely that he is living in a rare period in which the political culture of the day enables one to think what one pleases, and to express what one thinks.[88] Indeed, when Tacitus composed the *Annals*, with Trajan's reign firmly established, there was no need to reiterate the benefits of the switch (construed as radical and revolutionary by both Tacitus and Pliny) from dynastic to adoptive emperorship and the republican qualities and credentials of the latter. In fact, not doing so arguably enhanced his authority as an independent author. [**274**]

88 *Hist*. 1.1: ... *rara temporum felicitate ubi sentire quae uelis et quae sentias dicere licet*. One could argue here that the subject of the *Annals* is chronologically so far removed from Tacitus' own times that their treatment in historiography is anyway a risk-free undertaking, with no particular message about the political circumstances at the time of composition. But this consideration is not part of Tacitus' reasoning. Likewise, Cremutius Cordus – whose lethal conflict with Tiberius over his record of republican history Tacitus recounts in his *Annals* (4.34–5) – could tell another tale.

In rejecting his senatorial predecessors of imperial times and discrediting their historical writings, Tacitus not only justifies his own work but also links himself with the republican tradition of historiography. Or in the words of Marincola (1999) 403, 'Tacitus suggests that his own work will now treat events of the Empire in a way consonant with those *magna ingenia* of old', i.e. the republican historians, in particular Sallust and perhaps also including Livy. That is to say: through his *Annals*, Tacitus closes the double gap that has opened up between his own present and republican times, involving both Rome's political culture (specifically the loss of *libertas*) and the quality of Roman historiography, which has lost credibility because of fear, flattery and hatred. Conversely, the re-emergence of historiography of outstanding quality in the form of Tacitus' writings would suggest that the circumstances in which he composed the *Annals* are akin to those in place during republican times.

Tacitus presses this claim in various oblique ways: first, there is the strong nexus of political history and the history of historiography. Second, he implicitly asserts that *libertas* is the indispensable prerequisite for great and important history – the kind of history written by the *clari scriptores* of old. Third, by linking himself with his republican role models, in the second part of his proemium he hints at a new cycle that breaks through the unholy cycle of autocracy depicted in the first part. Whereas in the first cycle *libertas* is surrounded by monarchic rule and is ultimately suppressed by Augustus by means of *arma*, the historiographical theme of the second cycle links itself with exactly this *libertas*. In this cycle, the Augustan reign and the dark times of his successors are the abyss, after which matters improve again. Tacitus' work is itself testimony that history has taken a turn for the better: it harks back to the *magna ingenia* of the republic by – so the implication – benefiting from a restored *libertas*.

At the end of the opening chapter, then, the independent historian Tacitus stands supreme. A self-appointed arbiter of historical truth, he disowns any hint of self-interest in writing his account of the *aduersa* under the Julio-Claudians. Moreover, he asserts absolute control over his material: the concluding formulation *quorum causas procul habeo* points the reader back to the opening sentence *Vrbem Romam a principio reges habuere*, implying an analogy between the kings and Tacitus himself.

The proof for this boast is right here in the pudding: Tacitus' masterly depiction of Roman history from the kings to his own times in the course of one brief paragraph. Tacitus further seems to imply that neither the kings of old nor the renewer of their monarchic rule under the name of principate has any legitimate power of control over the city of Rome and its history. This is rather the dominion of republican historians and those of their successors, who, like Tacitus, recreate and emulate – or, more precisely, are now able to recreate and emulate – their republican commitments and outlook because of the circumstances in which they live. [**275**]

In the case of Tacitus these circumstances are defined by the regime of the *optimus princeps* Trajan who guarantees *libertas*, the indispensable prerequisite for real historiography. Therefore not only Tacitus and his historiography but also Trajan and the freedom available in his regime are linked to republican times. In this scheme of things, which Tacitus implies rather than spells out, he and the emperor Trajan work in synergy: both, in their respective sphere of responsibility, close the gap that separates the present from the times of the republic. By marginalizing the dynasties that dominated Rome for more than a century after Augustus instituted the principate (in Tacitus' books, a period of political enslavement and civil war, with the concomitant absence of great historiography), he and Trajan emerge as partners in reviving and continuing the success story of republican Rome that had come to a seemingly terminal end with Augustus.

In Tacitus' view, then, the republic finds its culmination not in Augustus, but in Trajan, whose ascent to power is diametrically opposite to the Augustan usurpation by force of arms and the principle of dynastic succession. As Pliny the Younger famously stresses in his *Panegyricus*, Nerva adopted Trajan as his successor by common consent, thereby obviating a renewed outbreak of civil strife. The terms of his rise to power signal a fundamental shift in Roman political culture back to the principles that sustained political life in republican times. In contrast to Augustus, Trajan did not need *arma* (5.1); nor did he need to suppress liberty. And in contrast to Augustus' adoption of Tiberius, his adoption by Nerva was carried out *non in cubiculo sed in templo* (8.1). In all, the reign of Trajan did not need to subdue the *res publica* or enslave its elite.

Tacitus, then, is not the only senator in the Trajanic period who

represents Augustus in an unflattering light – he seems to have had a rather bad press at the time, but few representations will have been as nasty as that of Tacitus in the opening chapter of the *Annals*: Tacitus here tears the first *princeps* to pieces and makes him a threefold villain: first, it is Augustus who exterminates the republic; second, Augustus is responsible for the disappearance of truthful historiography; and third, he is the chief culprit in the establishment of an evil form of government – dynastic succession – by adopting an incapable and cruel successor. To drive this point home, Tacitus even reports the rumour (without necessarily endorsing it himself) that Augustus was therein motivated by sheer spite and a desire to look good to posterity by contrast to his successor (*Ann*. 1.10.7). Tiberius and his reign thus appear as a consequence of the malignity of the first *princeps*. The focus is indeed squarely on Augustus: Tiberius is only mentioned twice in the proem and his own successors Gaius, Claudius and Nero, who are likewise the logical outcome of the Augustan seizure of power and his adoption of Tiberius, are only named once. In three ways Augustus destroyed a meaningful political life for the Roman elite, and his name, mentioned three times in the proem, becomes a curse on Roman politics, hovering like a dark shadow over the Julio-Claudian principate and accounting for the perversion [**276**] of public life that Tacitus chronicles in his *Annals* – always in implicit contrast to the realities under Trajan. In his narrative, Augustus is not the culmination of the republic but its gravedigger, the arch-villain and founder of the dynastic principate.

4.3 Tacitus' Destruction of Augustan History

If the beginning of the *Annals* diagnoses the destruction of Roman republican history (and historiography) by Augustus, the end of the *Annals* inverts the plot. Tacitus uses allusive references to the poetry of Virgil and Horace in his Nero-narrative to drive a triumphant and mocking stake through the heart of the Augustan conception of history. If, in the *Aeneid*, the empire struck, in the *Annals* Tacitus strikes back – not least by means of a shift in teleology: if the end of history in Virgil is the rise to power of Augustus, the beginning of history in Tacitus is the decline and fall of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

Three paragraphs from Tacitus' Nero-narrative illustrate the point:

first we have Nero's decision to visit the East, and in particular Egypt, a plan which is soon abandoned (15.36). This segues seamlessly into Tacitus' account of a massive orgy staged by Nero and Tigellinus – a city-wide bunga-bunga party that turns Rome *into* Egyptian Alexandria, the former abode of Antony and Cleopatra (15.37). The public consummation of Nero's mock-marriage to his freedman Pythagoras forms the literal and metaphorical climax to this depiction of debauchery – with the emperor in the prominent role of bride. (Or as Horace might have put it: Pythagoras, in a feat of anatomical impossibility, triumphantly deflowered a *non humilis mulier*.) Tacitus treats this stuff with his trademarked taciturnity – and follows it up promptly with the Great Fire of Rome (15.38). The juxtaposition is no coincidence: moral chaos leads to physical destruction. But within the general message that Tacitus has built into his faux-annalistic sequence lurks an intertextual deconstruction of the Augustan conception of history by means of allusive engagement with Horace and Virgil.[89] At *Ann*. 15.37.4, Tacitus refers to Pythagoras as 'one of that flock of polluted individuals' (*uni ex illo contaminatorum grege*) – co-opting a phrase from Horace's ode celebrating Rome's victory over Cleopatra (*Carm*. 1.37.6–10):

> ... dum Capitolio
> regina dementis ruinas
> funus et imperio parabat
> *contaminato* cum *grege* turpium
> morbo uirorum.
>
> [... while the frenzied queen was plotting destruction for the Capitoline Hill and obliteration of the empire together with her flock, polluted by disease, of shameful men.]

[**277**] This allusion to Horace clinches Tacitus' subliminal transformation of Rome into Alexandria: 'Horace was referring to the eunuchs who were conventionally associated with Egypt in the ancient world; and in his ode their leader, being a woman (regina), is an appropriate analogue to Nero, who in his wedding to Pythagoras adopts the female role. Yet Cleopatra was not only a woman but queen of, precisely, Alexandria.'[90]

89 We here follow Woodman (1998).
90 Woodman (1998) 181.

The allusion, then, achieves an identification of malicious ingenuity: Nero is Cleopatra, the king of Rome has turned into the queen of Egypt. Woodman further draws attention to the fact that Cleopatra's last Roman lover, Mark Antony – a distant ancestor of Nero, no less! – was accused by Cicero of a homosexual marriage 'in very similar terms to those used by Tacitus about Nero'.[91]

There is a further, sinister dimension to the Horatian intertext. His poem is, after all, a victory ode that celebrates a Roman triumph over an alien queen who, according to Augustan propaganda, *tried* to reduce Rome to ruins. Yet especially with the account of the fire coming up, Tacitus strongly implies that Nero succeeded where Cleopatra failed – Rome, in Horace's words, has become 'polluted', an empire has indeed come to an end. We are, in other words, faced with another inversion, this time at the level of authorial composition: whereas Horace, writing under Augustus, composed a victory ode of joy, relief and celebration that, in exorcising a threat from the East, looked forward to a bright future, Tacitus' narrative, which here chronicles the crimes of the last scion of the dynasty, who reverses Augustus' victory of West over East, offers an obituary for Julio-Claudian Rome which collapses the distinctions that pervade and sustain Augustan ideology: in a spectacle that is as sublime as it is gross, imperial history returns to its beginnings, as Nero, monstrously, becomes Augustus, Antony and Cleopatra all in one.

Tacitus' account of the fire elaborates on precisely this point. For our purposes five aspects are crucial.[92] First, Tacitus presents the fire as an enemy army that is sacking the city. Second, in so doing, he plays with the *urbs capta* motif, even though he turns the fire from an instrument into the agent of destruction. Third, the *urbs capta* motif has a long history – but the archetype is the sack of Troy. Fourth, captured cities (including Troy) are not normally set on fire until after their sack and the removal of plunder. There is, however, one prominent exception: Virgil's account of the sack of Troy in *Aeneid* 2. Austin observes that this

91 Woodman (1998) 184; see Cic. *Phil*. 2.44–6, 50, where Cicero casts Antony as Curio's toy-boy, who manages to ruin the household of his lover, in a larger argument involving an analogy between sexual depravity and the corruption of the body politic: see Gildenhard (2018) 147–9 with further literature.

92 The following draws on Paul (1982), Rossi (2004), Ch. 1 ('The Fall of Troy: Between Tradition and Genre', esp. 24–30: 'Flames') and O'Gorman (2000). For disaster narratives see also Keitel (2010) and for the Neronian fire Closs (2016).

thematic choice intertwines with issues in ideology by connecting the [**278**] (unorthodox) emphasis on catastrophic conflagration during the sack to the apologetic subtext that runs through Aeneid 2: 'traditionally it was only when they finally left Troy that the Greeks fired the city ... , and Heinze suggests that Virgil may be following some Hellenistic source. But there is no reason why the innovation may not be Virgil's own ... And the stress laid upon the flames stresses also the uselessness of trying to serve Troy by remaining there.'[93] And fifth and finally, Nero himself, so rumour has it, linked the fire of Rome to the sack of Troy.

There are, then, compelling reasons for reading Tacitus' account of the great fire of Rome intertextually with and against *Aeneid* 2. Within the plot of the *Aeneid*, of course, the phoenix fated to soar from the ashes of Troy is – Rome. The incineration of Troy in Book 2 is the radical point of departure of a teleological development that will see Rome founded as an alternative world-capital and in due course ascend to the status of Mediterranean superpower, ruling over a far-flung empire without end. In Augustan (and Virgilian) ideology, the principal agent of this 'transference of empire' (*translatio imperii*) from Troy to Rome was none other than the eponymous hero of the epic, Aeneas – the founding figure, via his son Ascanius or Iulus, of the *gens Julia*, to which Caesar, Augustus and Nero also belonged. Together, Virgil and Augustus ensured that the 'Troy connection' acquired a central place in the imagination of imperial Rome more broadly: many events in Virgil's literary universe stand in creative, aetiological dialogue with Augustan investment in Rome's Trojan ancestry. One of the best examples, not least for its relevance to Nero, is the so-called Game of Troy.[94] Its first, legendary celebration, so Virgil recounts in *Aeneid* 5, happened on Sicily during the funeral games for Aeneas' father Anchises; and he concludes his lengthy description by anticipating the future history of the Game down to the Augustan present, when the (now) ancestral practice still continued, with the boys called 'Troy' and their troop 'Trojan' (A. 5.596–602). Augustus, we learn from Suetonius, was particularly keen to sustain this tradition,

93 Austin (1964) 135. Keith (2016) 157–8 argues that Virgil's account of the Fall of Troy in *Aeneid* 2 stands in allusive dialogue with Ennius' account of the Fall of Alba Longa in *Annals* 2.

94 The following draws heavily on O'Gorman (2000) 162–75 ('The Game of Troy').

following in the footsteps of Caesar.[95] And it continued to be celebrated by his successors as well. In fact, a Game of Troy organized by Claudius provides the context for Nero's first appearance in Tacitus' *Annals*.[96] For our purposes, however, it is crucial to note that genealogical and aetiological connections between Troy and Rome do not amount to the identity of the two cities. In fact, in the [**279**] course of the *Aeneid* Aeneas is forced to undergo the painful process of learning to turn his back on Troy (and the past) and to pursue Rome (and the future). He does not fully grasp this until about midway through the poem. Likewise, in the final meeting between Jupiter and Juno towards the end of *Aeneid* 12 up in cloud-cuckoo-land, Juno only agrees to desist from further action in opposition to destiny once Jupiter has promised her that the Roman people will bear hardly any trace of Trojan cultural identity (such as speech or dress).[97] All of this is unsurprising: in a story that turns world-historical losers (the Trojans) into world-historical winners (the Romans), difference and differentiation from the catastrophic origins are just as important as legitimising continuities.

Against this background, what happens in Tacitus' *Annals* acquires a fascinating intertextual and ideological complexion. To begin with, in the paragraphs devoted to Pythagoras, Nero, with his lavish bridal dress, turns into a latter-day Trojan – he becomes the living embodiment of the effeminate Easterner, a caricature that beset Aeneas and his people throughout the *Aeneid*.[98] This may in part account for his conduct during the fire. Along with other sources, Tacitus records (though without committing himself to the truth of the rumour) that during the conflagration, Nero was moved to recite the fall of Troy.[99] If he did, Nero would have activated a tragic view of Rome's prospects of eternity that contrasts sharply with the notion of an *imperium sine fine* (*A*. 1.279).

95 Suet. *Jul*. 39.2, *Aug*. 43.2: *sed et Troiae lusum edidit frequentissime maiorum minorumque puerorum, prisci decorique moris existimans clarae stirpis indolem sic notescere*.

96 *Ann*. 11.11.2: *sedente Claudio circensibus ludis, cum pueri nobiles equis ludicrum Troiae inirent interque eos Britannicus imperatore genitus et L. Domitius adoptione mox in imperium et cognomentum Neronis adscitus, fauor plebis acrior in Domitium loco praesagii acceptus est*.

97 Verg. *A*. 12.791–842. See most recently Gildenhard and Henderson (2018) 35–40 with references to further literature.

98 See Gildenhard and Henderson (2018) 499–500 with references to further literature.

99 *Ann*. 15.39: ... *peruaserat rumor ipso tempore flagrantis urbis inisse eum domesticam scaenam et cecinisse Troianum excidium, praesentia mala uetustis cladibus adsimulantem*.

This outlook recalls, rather, Scipio Aemilianus. Greek sources report the Roman general to have been stirred to tragic reflexions after his sack of Carthage in 146 BCE, when he recited two verses from the *Iliad*, in which Hector recognizes the inevitability of the fall of Troy (6.448–49):[100]

> ἔσσεται ἦμαρ ὅτ' ἄν ποτ' ὀλώλῃ Ἴλιος ἱρὴ
> καὶ Πρίαμος καὶ λαὸς ἐϋμμελίω Πριάμοιο.
>
> [The day shall come when sacred Ilios will perish and Priam and the people of Priam with goodly spear of ash.]

Here Scipio both thinks backwards in time (to Troy) as well as forward (to Rome), in anticipating the same future for Rome that Troy (and Carthage) have already suffered: destruction.[101] In so doing, he clearly identifies Troy and Rome, at least from the point of view of their ultimate destinies – just as Nero does.[102] [**280**]

Nero's assimilation of the fall of Rome to the fall of Troy invokes a cyclical notion of history at variance with Virgilian teleology, the phoenix, having risen, being reduced to the ashes. But whereas the emperor may have simply wished to ponder the ephemeral nature of human achievement, Tacitus' Virgilian take on the Fire is much more sinister. Read intertextually with the *Aeneid*, it implies that Nero undoes the achievement of his ancestors, in particular Augustus; under his reign the success story of Julio(-Claudian) Rome that Virgil celebrated in the *Aeneid* unravels; he destroys the Virgilian masterplot by reducing Rome to its origins: the ashes of Troy. And he sings about it. What Nero does in verse, Tacitus does in prose. By taking his inspiration from the emperor and casting the Neronian fire in terms of a city sacked in his own narrative, arguably in oblique dialogue with the 'Fiendfyre' of *Aeneid* 2, he positions his *Annals* as the ideological antipodes of Virgil's *Aeneid*. If *in Virgil* the fall of Troy heralds the *beginning* of Rome and the inauguration of a history that has its positive end in Caesar and Augustus, i.e. the beginning of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, *in Tacitus* the fire of Rome *under Nero* turns into this history's negative end, in

100 App. *Pun*. 132. See further Gotter 2019.

101 See O'Gorman (2000) 168–72 for possible affinities between Scipio and Nero.

102 O'Gorman (2000) 173: 'Assimilation of Rome to Troy can therefore be seen as the destruction of Rome (so that Nero's poem is not merely a commentary on the situation but a curse which sets the disaster in motion).'

which the new foundation that emerged from the ashes of Troy and found its culmination in Augustan Rome is itself reduced to rubble by the *last* representative of the Julio-Claudian lineage. In Tacitus' text, then, annalistic historiography, the written version of Rome's republican social order, is alive and well, having outlasted Virgil's and Augustus' destruction of history.

* * *

As scholars such as Judith Ginsburg, John Henderson and Miriam Griffin have well worked out, the *Histories* and the *Annals* represent a stasis between two conflicting principles for organising historical subject matter into a coherent narrative: the annalistic republican and the dynastic-autocratic.[103] This gives us the paradoxical genre of 'imperial annals', in which the matrix remains more or less committed to a republican way of imposing meaning on time, whereas on the level of plot the dominant figures and protagonists are the emperors. Tacitus skillfully manipulates this tension for special effects. For example, scholars have diagnosed a gradual rise to prominence of the dynastic principle by focusing on the coincidence of the start of the year and the start of a book – or the lack thereof: the divisions coincide for the books that comprise the Tiberius-narrative, but then increasing incongruence sets in.[104] Yet this pessimistic outlook is not the whole story. For the annalistic principle – and senatorial pride – have a way of reasserting themselves even in the latter books of the *Annals*. Take *Annals* 15.23, for instance: [**281**]

> Memmio Regulo et Verginio Rufo consulibus natam sibi ex Poppaea filiam Nero ultra mortale gaudium accepit appelauitque Augustam, dato et Poppaea eodem cognomento.
>
> [During the consulship of Memmius Regulus and Verginius Rufus Nero welcomed the birth of a daughter by Poppaea with more than mortal joy and called her Augusta, with Poppaea receiving the same honorary name.]

103 Ginsburg (1981), Henderson (1998), Griffin (2009).

104 Compare Russell 2019 on order and irregularity in the Fasti Capitolini projecting a message about the state of the system.

Packed into what might seem a throw-away piece of annalistic dating especially for those sucked into thinking about history as inevitably centred on the reigning pervert, is a different conception of what history at Rome is all about – especially for those who approach the topic with a republican mindset:

Reigns	**'Dynasty'**	**Emperors**	**Annalistic sequence**	**Consuls**
14–37	Julio-Claudian	Tiberius	[...] 31 [...]	Tiberius and Seianus, with Memmius Regulus *pater* one of the suffect consuls
37–41		Caligula	[...]	
41–54		Claudius	[...]	
54–68		Nero	[...] 63 [...]	Memmius Regulus *filius*, Verginius Rufus
68–69		Galba, Otho, Vitellius	[...]	
69–79	Flavian	Vespasian	[...]	
79–81		Titus	[...]	
81–96		Domitian	[...]	
96–98	Nerva-Antonine	Nerva	[...] 97 [...]	Nerva and Verginius Rufus, with Tacitus one of the suffect consuls
98–117		Trajan	[...]	

The laconic recording of the two consuls for 63 according to annalistic convention points, in the case of Memmius Regulus, back to the recent past (as commemorated by Tacitus in his *Annals*) and, in the case of Verginius Rufus, forward into the distant future. The text thus evokes both potential dynastic continuity (a royal birth!) and annalistic [**282**] sequence as two complementary grids for situating the story of Rome in time. Tacitus himself reinforces the consular sequence in this case by means of a strategically placed epitaph of Memmius *pater* at 14.47 that works in negative synergy with the erection and destruction of a gymnasium, a repulsive Greek cultural institution, consecrated by

Nero.[105] His mode of composition, it hardly needs saying, has nothing to do with the recording of random events in chronological order: this is a purposeful design by which Tacitus validates the annalistic over the dynastic and which in the case of the consuls of 63 introduces a temporal vector that points to the authorial present, specifically Tacitus' stint as suffect consul in 97 and – if we factor in the proem to the *Histories* – the fact that he is writing as a consular historian in times that resemble the *libera res publica*: narrative form, authorial self-fashioning and the indictment of certain periods of Roman history (and the validation of others) go hand-in-hand. The rest of paragraph 15.23 makes it clear which sequence – dynastic succession or consular annals – have a better chance of withstanding the ravages of time: Nero's daughter died within a few months (*quartum intra mensem defuncta infante*).[106]

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105 See Owen and Gildenhard (2013) 115–17: at the end of his account of 61, Tacitus has chosen to include an obituary of Memmius Regulus pater in the same paragraph that records the dedication of Nero's gymnasium (14.47); for the end of 62, he notes the conflagration that destroyed the gymnasium and melted down the bronze statue of Nero on display there (15.22) and begins his account of 63 with a reference to the consulship of Memmius Regulus *filius* (15.23): the vanity project of the dynast is reduced to ashes, whereas aristocratic senatorial lineage defies time as it continues, in neat genealogical-annalistic sequence, from father to son.

106 In the previous paragraph, Tacitus (again, not coincidentally) records the death of the Vestal priestess Laelia and the co-option of a girl from the *gens* of the Cornelii Cossi to take her place. The contrast between the death of Nero's baby daughter Sabina Augusta and the 'eternal' replenishment of the Vestal priesthood with its impeccable republican pedigree and personnel, charged with guaranteeing the well-being of Rome (independent of the emperor), is stark and poignant – not least since the Cornelii Cossi go all the way back to the 5th-century BCE, i.e. the early years of republican Rome, after the initial period of kingship (*Vrbem Romam*...) had come to an end and the annalistic plot first took root: Owen and Gildenhard (2013) 118–19. Tacitus proves that this plot is still alive and well in his own time: dynasties die; Rome (and its senatorial nobility) last.

and R. O. A. M. Lyne (eds), *Epic Interactions: Perspectives on Homer, Virgil, and the Epic Tradition Presented to Jasper Griffin by Former Pupils*, Oxford, 131–58.

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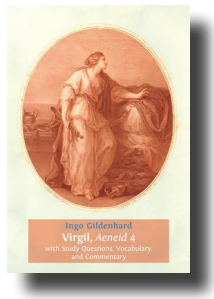

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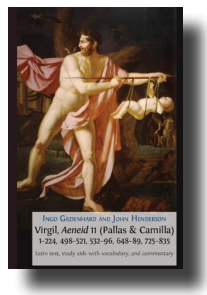
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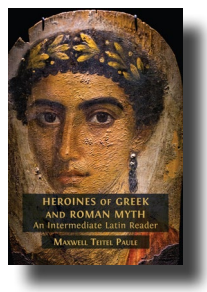

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